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# CHURCH MEMORIALS

AND

# CHARACTERISTICS

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# CHURCH MEMORIALS

AND

# CHARACTERISTICS

## Being a Church History of the First Six Centuries

BY THE LATE

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EDITED BY HIS SON

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# INTRODUCTORY NOTICE

A BRIEF sketch of the literary career of the author of this work may not be unacceptable to the readers of its pages. He was born at Newington Butts in the county of Surrey, in the year 1767, and was sent successively to Eton and St. Paul's schools, in the former of which his father's cousin was the provost, and in the latter his uncle, Dr. Roberts, the head master. At the early age of fifteen he was a successful candidate for a scholarship at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, where, having passed his undergraduateship with considerable credit, he was elected fellow. In the year 1788, on attaining his B.A. degree, he won the English prize essay, the subject of which was "Refinement." The high opinion entertained of his abilities may be inferred from the words of Dr. Cooke, the then President of Corpus, who pronounced him the splendid ornament of his college; and he was held in equal estimation by his tutor, Mr. Burgess, afterwards successively Bishop of St. Davids, and of Salisbury. In the year 1791 he was selected by the University to bring out an edition of the 'Marmorum Oxoniensium Inscriptiones Græcæ,' to which he prefixed a Latin preface. Shortly afterwards he set on foot, in conjunction with a friend, the Rev. J. Beresford, a periodical paper on the plan of the 'Spectator,' which was styled 'The Looker-On.' It extended to four volumes, and met with no little commendation from contemporary writers, one of whom affirms, that in his opinion there are few such "finished specimens of essay-writing." Having chosen the law for his profession, and been called to the bar, his next publications were all on legal subjects, and his 'Treatise on the Law of Wills and Codicils,' which went through three editions, was the standard work upon that branch of legislation till alterations in the law had made it obsolete. He was induced, after a while, to resume his literary pen, and, notwithstanding his avocations as a barrister and commissioner of bankrupts, he edited, for several years, a review on the scale of the Quarterly and Edinburgh, and which bore the title of the 'British.' In each successive number of this critical journal two or three of the principal articles were of his own composition. When it expired, he soon found fresh literary occupation in other ways. His 'Memoirs of Hannah More,' which extended to four volumes, and which he afterwards abridged, were much read, and much valued, by the friends of that distinguished lady, and passed through three editions.

Of his subsequent productions, the principal were his 'Portraiture of a Christian Gentleman,' in a small duodecimo volume, and his 'History of Letter-Writing.' He was the author also of two essays, entitled, 'The Call on the Church,' and 'The Call on the Great,' to the former of which "the Christian Influence Society" adjudged a prize. He died at an advanced period of life, in the year 1849, the posthumous work now presented to the public having been the last and most elaborate effort of his pen.

If there should seem any abruptness in the conclusion of this work, it will be explained by the fact that the author was prevented by his death from making such closing observations as he might otherwise have added. He cannot, however, be considered as having fallen short of his design, the boundary of which was the termination of the sixth century.

No ecclesiastical writer of importance can be said to have flourished for some centuries beyond that limit; but it will be found that none of the brighter lights within the period the author contemplated have been left unnoticed by him. This work may be regarded as a biographical Church History. Its distinguishing feature will be found to be that its views are based upon purely scriptural principles, whilst, as a composition, gracefulness and vigour will probably be allowed to be its characteristics.

It is hoped that this volume will be found interesting and instructive to all who desire information respecting the early history of the Christian Church, and that it will prove of special service to the clergy, and to those who are preparing for the clerical office.

# CONTENTS

PAGES
Various Uses of the Word "Church" in Holy Scripture .. 1–8
Apostolical Fathers .. 9–14
Early Heretics .. 15
Justin Martyr .. 18, 19
Platonising Christians of the School of Alexandria, Tatian, Athanagoras, Pantænus .. 20–24
Melito of Sardis, Theophilus of Antioch, Dionysius of Corinth .. 24–26
Irenæus .. 26–30
Clemens Alexandrinus .. 30–33
Tertullian .. 33–44
Origen .. 44–56
Gregory Thaumaturgus .. 57, 58
Dionysius of Alexandria .. 58–60
Cyprian .. 60–64
Cyril of Jerusalem .. 64, 65
Eusebius (including a Notice of the Nicene Council, 69) .. 66–74
Lactantius .. 74–77
Athanasius (including Notices of Sabellianism and Arianism, 96) .. 77–102
Hilary of Poictiers .. 102–109
Basil .. 109–116
Gregory of Nyssa .. 116
Gregory Nazianzen (including a Notice of Apollinaris and his Error, 119) .. 117–134
Epiphanius .. 134–139
Chrysostom .. 140–156
Ephrem Syrus .. 156–160
Theophilus .. 160
Cyril of Alexandria (including a Notice of Nestorius and his Followers, 161–165) .. 161–167
Synesius .. 167–173
Isidore of Pelusium .. 173–176
Theodoret .. 176–180
Ambrose .. 180–200
Jerom .. 200–236

Including Notices of—

Rufinus .. 213
Jovinian and Ærius .. 215
Vigilantius .. 217
Sulpicius Severus .. 219
Martin of Tours .. 220
Paulinus of Nola .. 225

PAGES
AUGUSTIN .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 237–283
INCLUDING NOTICES OF THE—
MANICHEES .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 240
DONATISTS .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 252
PELAGIANS .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 258
DECLINING STATE OF THINGS, BOTH MORAL AND POLITICAL, AT THE CLOSE OF THE FIFTH CENTURY .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 283
PAPAL ENCROACHMENTS .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 286
LEO I. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 288–307
INCLUDING NOTICES OF THE—
PRISCILLIANISTS .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 292
EUTYCHIANS .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 293
AURICULAR CONFESSION .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 302
EPISCOPAL AND THEOLOGICAL CONTENTIONS .. .. .. .. .. .. 307–315
THE HENOTICON OF ZENO .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 313, 314
SIDONIUS APOLLINARIS .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 316–325
CHARACTERS OF THE POPES DURING THE GREATER PART OF THE SIXTH CENTURY .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 327
SYLVERIUS .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 329
JUSTINIAN'S THEOLOGICAL EDICT .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 331
THE THREE CHAPTERS .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 333
IDLE SPECULATIONS AS TO CHRIST'S BODY .. .. .. .. .. .. 335
JUSTINIAN'S PANDECTS AND INSTITUTES .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 337
HIS CHARACTER .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 339
INVASION OF THE LOMBARDS .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 343
CRUEL DEATHS OF THE EMPEROR MAURICE AND HIS FAMILY .. .. 347
PONTIFICATE OF GREGORY I. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 348
CONVERSION OF THE ANGLO-SAXONS UNDER AUGUSTIN THE MONK .. 351–354
GREGORY'S STRIFE WITH JOHN BISHOP OF CONSTANTINOPLE .. .. 355
HIS DEATH AND CHARACTER .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 357

# CHURCH MEMORIALS
AND
# CHARACTERISTICS.

THERE is hardly a phrase in the English language of more frequent use in the ordinary intercourse of life than "the Church," and yet there is no word in our whole vocabulary of more indefinite and uncertain application. The Greek word 'Εκκλησία, from ἐκκαλεῖν, *evocare*, to call out, implies an evocation, or calling out, from the mixed mass or multitude of the people, of a special number for a special purpose; and if that purpose be a sacred purpose, for the sake of which an union is to be formed, under a particular dispensation, it properly assumes the name and character of "church."[1] In the antediluvian period of the world, the portion of mankind designated as "the sons of God" may be said to have constituted the Church, in its proper and holy sense, and by such demonstration to have been called out from the great mass or multitude who in contradistinction were called "the sons of men." The corruption derived from the first transgression at length so prevailed as to involve all alike in one general apostasy, save the family of Noah, and the Church, so reduced, was shut up in the Ark while it floated on the waters, and was afterwards, for three centuries and a half, obscurely traceable in the line of Shem, till it was divinely recognised and established by the covenant made with faithful Abraham.

The reader will perceive that we are not here treating of "church" in its general and variable import, but of "The Church," in particular reference to the Christian Dispensation, with respect to which it had a primordial origin and commencement in the great Creator's word and promise, from which its growth began as a tree from its root. Neither is the word "church," or *ἐκκλησία*, in its derivative, grammatical, or abstract signification proposed to be the subject of our consideration. The Greek word *ἐκκλησία* is used in Scripture very variously:—for an assembly of persons lawfully or unlawfully[1] convened—for the whole Israelitish congregation[2]—for an assembly of Christians[3]—for the rulers and teachers collectively[4]—for the people or flock generally[5]—for particular congregations[6]—for the faithful in a particular family or house[7]—for buildings set apart for Divine worship[8]—for the elect of God in all times, past, present, and to come[9]—for the faithful in heaven, or Church triumphant.[10]

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[1] Acts xix. 32.

Now without inquiring concerning these various uses and applications of the word church, our purpose is only to consider in what sense the phrase "the Church" is to be understood when that sense is not limited and ascertained by the express words of the context, but is to be construed only in accordance with the spirit and scope of the subject matter with which it stands connected.

Thus considered, the phrase "the Church" seems to be capable only of four distinct meanings. In a transcendental sense it may be considered as a mighty scheme or process passing on from stage to stage to its final accomplishment. It comprehends the economy of Redemption through its entire course and development. It is to be conceived as existing in the contemplation of the Divine intelligence,—a great work and achievement of power and beneficence, based upon the decree the performance whereof is "ordered in all things and sure." Taken in this compass, we must look for the beginning of this Church in the beginning of things, and proceed through all the periods of its militant state on earth to its consummate and seraphic state of triumph with the saints in glory. This is the Church, *κατ' ἐξοχὴν*, in which the attributes of perfect justice and perfect mercy are fully satisfied and balanced, the ravages of sin repaired, the omnipotence of grace illustrated, and the work of an inscrutable dispensation has been from the beginning, and still is, travelling to its accomplishment through a series of types and promises and prophecies to an end beyond the scope of all created intelligence. This was the "Church" and the "Tabernacle of Witness" which Moses conducted through the Wilderness.

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[1] Acts xix. 39.
[2] Acts vii. 38.
[3] 1 Cor. xiv. 34.
[4] Matt. xviii. 17.
[5] Acts xii. 5.
[6] Rev. ii. 1, 8, 12, 18; iii. 1, 7, 14. Rom. xvi. 1.
[7] Philem. 2.
[8] 1 Cor. xi. 18; comp. *v.* 20; and Acts xi. 26.—[Ed.]
[9] Matt. xvi. 18.
[10] Eph. v. 27.

In this comprehensive Church is included the whole community of saints living and departed in the faith,—the sanctified members of Christ, the children of God in all ages of the world, bound together in a spiritual corporation and mystical union. It is the "city of the living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem, the innumerable company of angels, the general assembly of the first-born," and of "the spirits of the just made perfect."

In this light we contemplate the Church as an enunciation and execution of the Divine will, relating to His own elect, as comprising and unfolding an entire economy, from the first intimation of prophecy to the mature disclosures of grace; as an amazing contrivance of love, whereby ruin and reconciliation have met in peace. It is the Invisible, Universal Church, of which all other churches, under whatever aspect they may be considered, are part and parcel, and to which they must be ministerial and subordinate. It is the Church under this hypothesis of its divine appropriation and workmanship whose beauty of holiness, especially the theme of the Canticles and the forty-fifth Psalm, is hardly less traceable through the whole series of figures, allusions, images, and illustrations which elevate and enchant the Christian reader as he treads the poetic ground of Scripture. He must be indeed unsusceptible of what is most great and glorious in thought and description if, in his walk of faith through that scene of promise and of hope, he can fail to recognise the progress and development of the kingdom of Christ, the aggression, increase, and triumph of saving mercy over the powers of darkness, and the prospective establishment of the mystical Israel. It is in this mirror that the Church we are considering is reflected; the bride is attired before it in her odoriferous garments. Here we have presented to us the personification of the great subject of Grace, the sum and substance of faith and holiness and pardon, the perpetual theme of angelic research, and the pure emanation of seraphic love.

Thus subjectively considered, the first aspect in which the Church presents itself to us is as a great and growing work, carried on in the Divine counsel, having no limit but in the perfection of its plan and its plenary accomplishment.

A second aspect under which the Church may be considered is that which brings it before us objectively and in a more restricted and approachable character, as a society upon earth, not indeed locally circumscribed, but united in spirit, and bearing one and the same relation to their great Head, the Captain of our common salvation; not a confused multitude, but united in vital communion and fellowship, and announced in its purity and sanctity under the supreme designation of "the Holy Catholic Church,"[1] whose warrant and seal of incorporation is registered and reposited in Scripture among its muniments of grace and mercy. The members of this Church are the faithful, wherever they are found; it is a spiritual edifice reared upon the foundation of the Prophets and Apostles, whose "corner stone" is Jesus Christ. Of the members of this Church none are nominal: all that belong to it are its component parts. Against it "the gates of hell" shall never "prevail." It is the instrument by which the unfathomable counsels of God are accomplished on

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[1] The term Catholic was not originally in the Apostles' Creed. It owes its introduction into that symbol to the Greeks. The first Creed wherein it is found was that of Alexander, Bishop of Alexandria. See on Καθολικὴν Ἐκκλησίαν apud Theodoret, 'Eccles. Hist.' lib. I., c. 14, p. 18. Thence it passed into both the Creeds of Epiphanius, in his book intituled 'Sermo Anchoratus,' and into those of several other Greeks, from whom it was adopted by the Latins; denoting the one Holy Church, intended hereby to be that which is diffused throughout the whole world, "from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same." The word forbids too straitened a conception of the Church, and checks the natural tendency to make the entrance into it narrower than the Founder intended it. The primitive Fathers were, in general, too much disposed, in favour of their own particular Churches, to narrow the range of this unity. To prevent this tendency the word catholic was adopted in the Creed, that the one Holy Church might not be considered as confined to any particular place, but as diffused throughout the whole earth. It was meant to imply, that, from one end of the world to the other, those who make profession of Jesus Christ with sincerity are the constituent members of this one Holy Church.

Thus has Jesus one visible body or Church here on earth, comprehending all the sincere professors of His name, who maintain the purity of the faith, and the unity of the spirit in the bonds of charity. With which expanded Church we are bound by our profession to be in devout communion, and to which with the true homage of the soul we are loyally to adhere.

The Donatists, though orthodox in matters of doctrine, yet by reason of a quarrel at the election of Cecilian to the bishopric of Carthage, commenced a long and violent schism, uncharitably affirming that their party was the one Holy Catholic Church, and that all others without its pale and limits had no right to administer any of its sacraments or offices; that whatsoever the other Churches performed were nullities. And it seems that, in opposition to such pretensions, the clause of "The Communion of Saints" was inserted in the Creed.

His creatures; and of this living structure all who are destined to a life of grace here and glory hereafter are the proper materials. It is, in Scripture language, a body, of which the several parts are mystically united under one head. "No man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth it and cherisheth it, even as the Lord does the Church; for we are the members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones"[1]—a most interesting and awful exposition of the union of the members of the true Holy Catholic Church with the humanity of Christ, and, through His humanity, with His glorious Godhead. It is an indivisible communion and identification, of which all are partakers who belong to this elect community.

This Holy Catholic Church comes before us also in the type and character of a Kingdom, of which Christ is "the blessed and only Potentate," with its laws inscribed in the tablet of the heart, and its discipline secured by an inseparable affinity between the sovereign and the subject. This is the Holy Catholic Church upon earth. Those who belong to it in spirit and in truth have the testimony of their adoption inscribed on their consciences, though their communion with it can only be indicated in the life and conversation. The Holy Catholic Church, in this pure sense of it, exults in the righteousness of the Redeemer's character, waits for the full manifestation of His glory, and for the triumph of that day of consummation, when the elect shall be numbered, and such as are written in the book of God's remembrance shall be finally accounted of in the making up of "His Jewels."

Thus are all the communicants of this Church indissolubly one, not by their own unity, which of itself would have no certainty of continuance, but by their identification with the mystical body of their self-sacrificed Redeemer, who has made them integrally one, and has sealed their incorporation with the assurance of an unchanging decree. It is an invisible Church, and those who are members of it are such only in spiritual communion. It claims for itself the title of universal on the ground of its extension to all places, times, stations, and degrees, being no other than the great Spiritual House or Temple of which our Lord has laid in Himself the foundation or "chief corner stone" in Zion.

This Church is to be found, and *only* to be found, with its true description, signs, and attributes in the Book of God. It is gloriously visible in the Scriptures of Truth, though invisible in structural consideration; visible to the eye of faith, but unseen by the eye of sense. It exists in Scripture as the model and exemplar of every true, visible church upon earth; and whenever "the Church," in the full compass of the phrase, is proposed from the pulpit as our spiritual guide and resolver of our doubts or difficulties, it is to this Church that we are to raise our conceptions; it is to this Church that the mind of the Christian worshipper is directed when the rubric of our National Service invites him to belief in "the Holy Catholic Church." It is no abstraction, but clothed in the substantial verities of a spiritual investiture, and speaking the language of the law and testimony.

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[1] Eph. v. 29.

But if the Church is invisible, not so the membership with it; where two or three are met together in a visible communion with this invisible Church, our Lord is there in performance of His infallible promise, and there He acknowledges the Church of which He condescends to be the Head to be represented in character and conformity.[1] Nor can human authorities shut us out from this Holy Communion, of which we may remain the happy members, though under a decree of excommunication from any visible church upon earth; and whatever membership individuals may have with any visible church upon earth, unless they are members also of this pure, invisible Church, they come short of that faithfulness which is required to their salvation. They have no union with the mystical body of our Saviour Christ. Such is the Holy, Catholic, Invisible Church, and whatever visible church is not within the circuit of its expansion is without the one thing needful to a Church of Christ—the righteous rule of its great High Priest and King.

A visible Universal Church is the next subject of consideration. In local extension such a church has never existed; but if, by the epithet "universal," we understand no more than unity, integrality, and singleness of doctrine and discipline, there was a time when there was one visible universal Church, co-extensive with the limits of the Christian commonwealth. The Apostolic period, which followed immediately on our Saviour's ascension, exhibited an universal Church if understood in relation to the bounds to which Christianity was then extended. It was universal within that circumscription. The several local congregations into which this Church was distributed, being under the inspired teaching of the Apostles, were, by their close affinity, but one in vocation, faith, and discipline, and might well be designated under the general name of "the Church." They were assimilated in the order and decency of worship. They drank of the same spiritual rock, "and that rock was Christ." All the Apostles taught the same things, and the whole college, having one Divine commission, spoke the same harmonious language. There was an universality in their teaching, and the Church over which their teaching extended was, in this sense, and to this extent, universal. The saving doctrines of our authentic Creed were the precious deposit entrusted by the Saviour to His immediate followers; and of this inestimable treasure the first faithful keepers were the first congregation to which belonged the name and distinction of a visible Church. It was the Ark of this Scriptural Israel which sanctified the host, and made the valour of the saints mighty above persecution, suffering, and death.

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[1] Collectively understood, this Church is an invisible Church, but distributively it flourishes on earth in the faith and piety of its spiritual adherents and communicants. Of such that Church is composed, which the beautiful Hymn that casts so bright a lustre on our Liturgy thus brings before us, "The Holy Church throughout all the world doth acknowledge Thee." That is, wheresoever upon earth the spiritual life of this Invisible Communion is made manifest in the walk of those whom grace has moulded into conformity with the image of Christ.

Our Lord, while in the flesh, had sent His Apostles only to the chosen seed of the House of Israel; but, after His ascension, their commission was to all nations, and thus the universal Christian Church, having not only one faith, one baptism, and the same hope and calling, but moved by one impulse, and regulated by one principle, had its beginning and primary constitution from Him who has fitly compared Himself to a Temple, and was the sure pledge of its stability. On the day of Pentecost, the preaching of St. Peter brought three thousand souls to the baptism of Christ, and the new converts "continued steadfast" in the doctrine and fellowship of the Apostles. The Christian Church was now one visible Church upon earth; and while things were in this state, the words "the Church" had a clear meaning and reference; and when those words, "The Church," were pronounced, none could doubt what church was intended. "The Church," or the spiritual Israel of God, which had been prefigured under the literal and carnal Israel of the Old Testament, was announced in its missionary and social character by our Lord's commission to the twelve, and afterwards to the seventy, and in the subsequent ministry of the inspired Apostles, displaying its supernatural gifts on the day of Pentecost, when the dawn of its effulgence began to disperse the gloom of pagan darkness. Then was displayed its holy origin in its triumph over the tendencies of inveterate corruption, till the mysterious hand of Providence converted persecution into patronage, and changed the sceptred rulers of the world into "nursing fathers and nursing mothers." In this enlargement of the bounds of the Church to the dimensions of the Roman power, it cannot but be acknowledged that Christianity presented itself under the aspect, and was recognised under the form and title of a *visible universal Church.*

Local churches and distinct congregations divided the Christian community in the earliest period of its formation. But while these churches were under the inspired teaching of the Apostles, they could not but receive the same instruction and doctrine; and "the Church" was a name and designation which still properly belonged to it. All the Apostles appeared to exercise an authority over all the infant churches; and the scattered congregations were all assimilated in the decencies and forms of worship. In their Epistles General this unrestricted right of interference was plainly asserted. The first Epistle of St. Peter was "to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia;" St. James addresses himself to the twelve tribes. Many churches were of the foundation of St. John, whose chief place of residence was Ephesus, where St. Paul had, many years before, established a church, and appointed Timothy the bishop thereof; but to which, doubtless, the authority and ministry of St. John equally extended. In like manner, in the seventh chapter of 1st Corinthians, St. Paul expresses himself in terms which imply this general apostolical authority—"And so ordain I in all churches."

The stream of consecration and ordination flowed bright and clear from its source. The Apostles had the power of imparting the graces and privileges of the Holy Spirit. They were conferred by Peter and John upon the converts of Philip the deacon, by the imposition of their hands. Of the undisputed existence of this apostolic government, the charge given by Paul to the elders of Ephesus, whom he had summoned to Miletus, was another instance; and so unquestionable was this authority of the immediate followers of the Saviour, that those who refused to submit to it were considered as disturbers of the Christian rule and subordination, as may be gathered from many places in Scripture, especially that relative to Diotrephes,[1] as well as from the denunciations of St. Paul,[2] and the strong passages to the same effect in the Epistle of St. Jude.

"The Church" was an appellation proper to the great body of Christian worshippers only so long as it was one spiritual fraternity, acting in its local divisions under the guidance of the same Spirit, with an identity of doctrine and a partnership in suffering. Oppression and persecution without had a tendency to consolidate interior union; and this tendency to union was, to a considerable degree, characteristic of Christian societies during the three first centuries. There are but few writings extant to bear testimony to the value and quality of the views and opinions of those whom we dignify by the title of the Fathers of that early period. Enough, however, has reached us of the fruits of their learning and thinking, to show that on many essential points very wide differences existed among them. Still, however, it can hardly be doubted that the times least remote from the Apostles are to be regarded as the purest in doctrine and discipline. The judgment and practice of the primitive Church carry, also, the greatest weight in all matters relating to apostolical usage, and the letter and spirit of institutions grounded on inspired authority; nor can we refuse to the memories of the confessors, saints, and martyrs, who gave their living and dying testimonies to the truth in its inceptive and struggling state, our reverential and grateful homage. But the first ages of the Church, though freer from gross errors than those which succeeded, showed less and less of the simplicity of the Gospel, as the distance increased from the sources of pure instruction. With Justin, called the Martyr, the series of those Fathers began whose writings have not had the advantage of apostolical communication. His works are a specimen of the unsoundness which began to prevail in the religious opinions of the second century. Though entitled to the praise of great firmness and zeal in the Christian cause, yet in scriptural interpretation, and even in his practical divinity, he has no claim to be followed as a safe or useful guide. After his time, it would be difficult to find an entire visible communion answering to the conception of an universal Christian Church upon earth, so far separated were the various bodies of worshippers, and so various and licentious were the fanciful creeds, which in the succeeding times were multiplied by ignorance, ambition, and superstition.

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[1] 3 John 9, 10.

[2] 2 Cor. xi. 13.

We may safely presume that under those Fathers who are usually called apostolical, from their personal communication with the Apostles themselves, or their immediate disciples, the essence, if not the form, of a society in the various churches, however dispersed, was maintained in an union of spiritual membership. But still the writings of these Fathers have added little or nothing to improve our acquaintance with the Holy Scripture, or to bring the understanding heart more under the influence of its light and leading. Indeed, such of the works as have come down to us under the names and authorities of those holy men are some of them of doubtful ascription, and others greatly interpolated and corrupted. Clement, who was perhaps the person named by St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Corinthians, and who appears to have lived to the close of the first century, is historically presented to us as the author of two epistles to the Corinthians, of which the first only is generally admitted to be genuine, while several spurious productions have made a fraudulent use of his name and authority. According to Hegesippus, as cited by Eusebius, the Church continued in a sort of virgin state to Trajan's time; but still he admits, with the inconsistency of a weak man, that after the disappearance of the last of the Apostles, the conspiracy of error began to show itself with open face.[1] There can be but little question that the theological teaching of the Christian Church was comparatively pure in its beginning and infancy, and that it grew less pure as it receded farther and farther from the days of the Apostles, till about the middle of the third century; of the intellectual productions of which period, if time has envied us the possession, truth and genius may be patient under the loss. Very little remains to us but a long list of names and titles of books which belong to the three first centuries, enumerated in the pages of Eusebius, Jerom, and others.[1] The most important of the writers of those times, which have come down to us after the days of Clement, Ignatius, and Polycarp, are some discourses of Justin, called the Martyr; the five books of Irenæus, who followed but a little after him; some learned pieces of Clemens Alexandrinus, who wrote towards the end of the second century; divers books of Tertullian; the Epistles and other treatises of Cyprian of Carthage, martyred 261 A.C.; the productions of Arnobius and Lactantius, and some few others. It was the praise of Clement and Polycarp that they reflected the graces of the apostolical model, and made new channels for the stream which issued from the sanctuary, through which it was transmitted and diffused without stain or admixture.

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[1] Euseb. 'Hist. Eccl.,' lib. III. c. 32.

It would be presumptuous in any pen to attempt the portraiture of St. Ignatius. His character is lost in his greatness. No thought or sympathy can reach its altitude. The current of nature was turned back upon its springs till it accumulated a strength that bade defiance to all tyranny and torture. Unhappily forgery and fraud have stolen his name for controversial or superstitious ends. Some Greek epistles which have been sent forth, and are still extant under his name, and as many in Latin, whereof one is from the Virgin Mary to Ignatius, and his answer to the same, two from Ignatius to St. John, and one from Maria Cassibolita to Ignatius, have found little adoption or countenance. All the epistles which truly belong to him were those which he is stated to have written on his journey from Antioch to Rome, the scene of his suffering; and the last of those was to intreat the Christians at Rome not to use any means, or in any way to interpose, to prevent his martyrdom. Of the two copies of these seven accredited epistles, one is of a larger, and the other of a smaller size, which latter has the superior character of genuineness. The immoderate exaltation of the dignity of the episcopal order has subjected these letters to the suspicion of being much interpolated. Thus, in his Epistle to the Ephesians, we find, among other passages of the same tendency, the following: "Whomsoever the Master of the house sends to be over his own household, we ought to receive, even as we would Him that sent him. It is therefore evident that we ought to look upon the bishop as we would upon the Lord." And again, in his Epistle to the Smyrnæans: "Be obedient to your bishop, as Jesus Christ was to the Father." "Whatever the bishop shall approve of, that is also pleasing unto God." To the Trallians he thus writes: "Let all reverence the deacons as the commandment of Jesus Christ, and the bishop as Jesus Christ." His letter to Polycarp has the following sentiment: "My soul be security for those who submit to their bishop, presbyters, and deacons. And my portion be together with theirs in God!" This extravagant homage and reverence claimed by such authority for the dignitaries of the ecclesiastical order became soon after very generally insisted on and allowed through the whole Christian community; and if the passages above cited are fairly chargeable upon him, his otherwise unsullied memory must bear at least some of the blame of the sacerdotal pride too generally characteristic of the first ages of Christianity, and which in later times was absorbed by the usurpation and insolence of papal Rome.[1]

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[1] [It may be interesting to set before the reader the way in which two celebrated writers have accounted for the fact here stated. "Indeed we have but little left," says Thomas Fuller, "of the story of those times, wherein Christian books were as much persecuted as men, and but a few confessor-records, escaping martyrdom, are come to our hands. Yea, God may seem to have permitted the suppression of primitive history, lest men should be too studious in reading, and observant in practising, the customs of that age, even to the neglecting and undervaluing of His written word."—('Holy State,' book III. c. 24.) The observations of Martin Luther, expressed in his own vigorous and characteristic way, are not dissimilar:—"Potest misericordiâ videri quod historiam multorum Patrum veteris ecclesiæ Deus voluerit intercidere, ita ut nec ipsorum Apostolorum (excepto libro Actor.) res gestas ullius historiæ certa veritate cognitas habeamus. Ne scilicet, Christo neglecto, magnitudinem sanctorum nimis admiraremur et adoraremus. Quanquam nec eo consilio quicquam est profectum, cum, Satana diversum suadente, tot sanctorum cultus invenerimus, ut tandem et confictis sanctis, puta Catherinæ, Barbaræ, Margaretæ, Ursulæ, item Christophoro, Georgio, Rochio, et multis aliis idolis serviverimus, ita perdite, ut Judæorum idololatrias magnifice justificaverimus." —(Luther's 'Preface' to Barnes's 'Vitæ Romanorum Pontificum.')—ED.]

The principal, and indeed almost the only writers of estimation in this early period of the Church, commonly dignified by the name of the Apostolical Fathers, were Clemens Romanus,

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[1] [The important publication of Mr. Cureton has gone far to exonerate Ignatius from the authorship of such passages as those above quoted, inasmuch as they are not to be found in the valuable Syriac MS. of which he has presented the public with a translation.—Ed.]

Ignatius, and Polycarp, the last of whom finished at the stake his holy and faithful career in the year of our Lord 167. Hermas has little to entitle him to a place in this primitive class of writers on divine topics but his pious spirit and zeal in the cause in which he was engaged. He is wholly occupied with visions and revelations, the unsound products of a mind of warm and teeming fancy, uninformed by reason and unmatured by reflection. Of Papias,[1] Bishop of Hierapolis in Phrygia, who is said, but on no very good authority, to have been a disciple of the evangelist St. John, and who seems to have been the first propagator of the doctrine of a millennium, nothing now remains but some fragments of his five books, containing some traditional accounts of Christ and His Apostles, mentioned and partly preserved by Irenæus, Eusebius, and Jerom; by whom he is set down as a man of piety and purity, but of mean abilities and weak credulity.

That in the primitive period of the first and second century a greater purity of life and doctrine prevailed among those who, at the imminent peril of their lives, professed and maintained the Christian faith, cannot be brought into question. But the noble patterns which we have been considering were not without their contrasts even in this infancy of the Church. The lofty notions which seem to have been entertained by Ignatius of the elevation of the clergy, and especially of the bishops, above other mortals, were too well received and improved by those who found in them so much that was agreeable to the natural heart. Magnificent titles in process of time were adopted and allowed as the appendages of clerical offices and preferments, and bishops were addressed as apostles, princes, and popes, vicars of Christ and vicegerents of God.[1] The necessary consequence of these unseemly usages was the rapid growth of a character but little in accordance with the teaching and examples of those who took their lessons from the Saviour's mouth, or first uttered them in the accents of the infant Church. Sacerdotal egotism, and the appetite for distinction, thus flattered by ignorance and servility, would not be long in producing a state of things the tendency of which was to disintegrate the Church and dissolve the harmony of its structure and discipline. Egotism and the excessive love of distinction, when furnished with the opportunities of exercise and display, even among Christian men, often lead to a state of things in which personal vanity seeks its gratification in the strife of opinion and the maintenance of conflicting dogmas. Factions and schisms begin to arise, and extravagant fancies, bred out of the corrupt admixture of Jewish fables and Gentile philosophy with the Divine teaching of the Gospel, became the fruitful source of unnumbered errors and heresies.

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[1] The popular and much-cherished error of St. Peter's episcopacy in Rome is grounded on the authority of this Papias. Thus a modern author of no small accuracy and discernment expresses himself:—"Papias may be considered as the author of this legend, who by his forgeries, wilful or innocent, has led all the critics who have followed him into error; thus laying, though perhaps unconsciously, the foundations of that powerful system which, by its ideal grandeur and material force, has alike subjugated, during a series of ages, the mighty and the feeble of Christendom. It is on the assertions of this saint that Eusebius affirms the journey of St. Peter to Rome; and it is on the authority of the latter that the Romish Church bases her claim to the successorship of the Apostle. Unfortunately for those who place faith in him, not only are his intellectual capacities contested, but he is charged with a fault which must deeply compromise him with every Christian man, and that is neither more nor less than want of honesty. (See the translation of a work by Augustus Scheler, Doctor in Philosophy. London, 1846. Nisbet.) The work here referred to is well worthy of the attention of the scholar and the divine. That St. Peter was ever at Rome may be very reasonably doubted, but to believe that he was a bishop of that city, after reading Mr. Scheler's work, entitled, 'Was St. Peter ever at Rome?' would imply a very stubborn credulity. Can any one who has the least acquaintance with literature admit what is said concerning the journey of St. Peter to Rome, or his residence of twenty-five years in that city, or the martyrdom which he there suffered?

No small number of the first converts to Christianity, most distinguished for their zeal and piety, brought with them into the bosom of the faith deep stains of their pagan learning; and thus the "mystery of iniquity" began its work but too successfully with the help of these unsanctified elements. Some of these persons had been teachers in the schools of Alexandria and other places of academical instruction, and could not disencumber themselves of an erudition which had gained them so much distinction, and taken such hold of their thoughts and imaginations. It was their aim, therefore, if possible, to adjust the differences between the doctrines of Christianity and the presumptuous suggestions and inventions of human reason by a most incongruous intermixture; and the effort soon disclosed its effects in a multitude of allegorical and fanciful interpretations of Scripture, tending to disguise and distort its plain meaning and majestic simplicity.

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[1] [See Bingham's 'Antiq.' book II., c. 3, 4, 5, 6. Jerom absurdly renders Isa. lx. 17, "I will make thy princes peace and thy bishops righteousness." He expresses in a note his admiration of the majesty of Holy Scripture in that it calls those who were to be bishops in future ages by the name of princes.—ED.]

Before the last of the Apostles had finished his labours, the opinions of the Gnostics or Docetæ and the scholars of Cerinthus introduced their dangerous conceits and contentions into the Church in direct opposition to each other, the one maintaining the Saviour to be man in appearance only, the other to be truly man, and nothing more. And these heresies, sometimes in separation, and sometimes in a forced and preposterous union, disfigured for a considerable time the profession of Christianity while it was still fresh from the fountains of inspiration.

From the foolish and fantastic notions of the Gnostics, mixed with the crudities of Rabbinical learning, Cerinthus appears to have borrowed his wild and blasphemous theories; and although the date of those early assaults upon the Church is in some obscurity, there is much ground for the opinion not only that they were put forth in the lifetime of the Apostle St. John, but that it was a special object of that holy teacher of doctrinal divinity to encounter and confute them in all their inferences and tendencies; and for this opinion we have the authority of Irenæus, a disciple of Polycarp, the friend of St. John.[1] Among the branches deducible from these germs are the doctrines of the Ebionites of the second century, and the Unitarians and Socinians of our own times. Thus the heresy denying the divinity of Christ was almost coeval with the Church itself, and was among the first-fruits of that evil proneness of the carnal heart to emancipate itself from Scripture teaching, and to subject the deep things of God to the arbitrary exposition of human intelligence. To these first departures from Scripture we are to attribute the long catalogue of heresies which in frightful succession have invaded the quiet of the Church, and poisoned the fountains of her pure doctrines. Even the sole Sovereignty of the Great Creator was, in this early age of the Christian dispensation, brought into dispute; and the despicable reveries of Saturninus, Carpocrates, and Basilides found, among the converts of the beginning of the second century, numerous trains of deluded followers. Such was then, and such have ever been, the calamitous consequences of

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[1] See Lardner's Works, vol. IV., pp. 567-569; ib. IX. 325-327. Michaelis, vol. III. 385.

sowing the tares of human philosophy among the holy seed of the Word.

It should be noticed, however, that of the first and second centuries of the Church we have very little contemporaneous history. Clement was the only one of the Apostolical Fathers who lived and wrote in the first century. The purport and aim of Clement's writings to the converts at Corinth was to revive in their minds the lessons of St. Paul ; and neither he nor the Apostolical Fathers of the second century bring before us the real predicament of the Church at that epoch of its history. The safest conclusion would probably be that individual professors appeared under very opposite extremes in worth and character, and that the state of the churches exhibited a variety similar to that under which the evangelical writer of the Revelation sets before us the excellences and defects of the Asiatic churches in the epistles which our Lord addressed to them.

To Irenæus and Epiphanius we are principally indebted for the accounts of the facts and transactions of the first age of the Church, and their frequent discrepancies deduct greatly from the conclusiveness of their relations.

There is reason to think that sanctity of morals and religious knowledge went on declining as the times receded from the Apostolical period. Innocence and holiness could not well be on the advance while religion was drawing from sources independent of Scripture, and the Church in her externals was endeavouring to outrun even worldly ambition in the race of spurious glory.

It is not to be doubted that, during the first and second centuries, a pure and orthodox faith was transmitted as the patrimony of the saints by faithful adherents to the written Word, many of whom patiently suffered the loss of all things for the truth's sake, or sealed their confession with their blood. But yet the face of Christianity was greatly marred and obscured, even in this period of its juvenescence, by numerous sects, whose prejudices and previous habits had so darkened their perceptions of Divine things as to lead them to degrade the mysteries of revelation by distorting them into union with their own corrupt imaginations. As there arose a great diversity among professors of a true faith, from this propensity to blend with its tenets the vain theories and vicious speculations of heathen philosophy, so from the same sources the principles of moral conduct were disturbed and perplexed, and very opposite systems found their pretexts in one or other of these discordant combinations. Severe mortification, or gross indulgence, was practised by different theorists as their unauthorised dogmas varied in the consequences and extremes in which they resulted. By these, and such-like interior disorders, the state of Christianity became less and less characterised by that unity of constitution and discipline throughout its local divisions which accords with the idea of a visible universal Church.

In the second century Christianity in some measure changed its aspect and external bearing. In the first age it opposed to its adversaries only its abounding evidences and the Divine force, the *ἰσχὺς Θεῖα,* of its awful verities ; but, by the accession of some persons of great secular learning and inquiry to its growing cause, it rose to higher importance in the consideration of those who had hitherto looked contemptuously upon it, while it drew upon itself, in this new character, a more exasperated spirit of persecution in the multitude, and provoked to greater hostility and hate the baffled philosophy of the schools. Yet this new alliance was far from being conducive to the interests of genuine Christianity. Pagan learning brought with it an infusion of pagan superstition. Many of the new converts had been teachers and professors of philosophy in the heathen schools, and judged it right and expedient to give to Christianity the benefit of an advocacy which might put it upon a par with the sophistry of its most skilful opponents. But this could only be done by the sacrifice of the purity of a faith which could suffer no intermixture with earth-born wisdom, or the suggestions of mere human reason, without injury to its holiness and honour.

The Emperor Marcus Aurelius, surnamed Antoninus, was a person of eminent worth and dignity, the prince of philosophers in his day. But the dogmas and maxims of the ancient schools of morals and theology had so zealously engaged him in their defence and support, that the conversion of a heathen philosopher to the Christian religion not a little offended his prejudices ; and thus it was that no reign, since that of Nero, was more distinguished by the persecution of the Christians. But the Christians had now also a philosophy on their own side ; and though it cannot be said that its service was unaccompanied with injury to the cause in which it was engaged, yet neither can it be denied that the apologies for Christianity, which were composed by the philosophical converts during the reign of Marcus, and were followed by others towards the close of the second century, were important for their effect in turning the arms of the assailants against themselves. The apologies of Justin Martyr, Athenagoras, and Tatian were all produced in this reign. These works are still extant, and attest the unwholesome effect of the conjunction of heathen ethics with the pure and holy dictates of heavenly wisdom. They spread alarm, however, among the pagan philosophers and rhetoricians, and brought Celsus, and others on that side, into the field. The weapons of the Christian philosophers were not all of the true temper. They seemed not to know that the truth as it is in Jesus is not only the best philosophy, but the best logic of the Christian believer, and that to know Christ is to know Him as He is offered to us by the Father, invested with His Gospel, and immeasurably high above human conception.

Justin, surnamed Martyr, was born in Syria, about the year of our Lord 103, at the very beginning of Trajan's reign, and finished his course by an illustrious martyrdom in the year 167. He was the first of the professors of heathen philosophy who became a convert to the teaching of the Gospel. His testimony to the truth is the more worthy of respect, as it was the fruit of a conviction that arose out of a candid and careful examination of the evidences and doctrines of the writings of inspiration, after a successive and unsatisfactory investigation of all that was taught in the several schools of the Stoics, the Pythagoreans, and the followers of Plato. His secession from the ranks of heathen philosophy, and his deliberate adoption of the simple but sublime faith of the Gospel, had the natural effect of inflaming the hostility of those whose opinions he had rejected. These consequences were no check upon the bold and persevering efforts of Justin to confute the errors which he had thrown aside. In the year 139 Justin came to Rome, and during his stay there composed his book against heresies, in which the impure errors of Marcion were exposed and confuted. In the year 140 his first apology for the Christians made its appearance, addressed to Antoninus Pius and his adopted sons. It is said to have had a salutary influence on the mind of that mild emperor, and to have led him to adopt a gentler treatment of his Christian subjects. In the reign of his philosophical successor, when the flames of persecution were rekindled, the zeal of Justin led him to stand forth once more as the champion of the Cross, in his 'Second Apology for Christianity.'

The malice of the philosophers in spreading calumnies against the lives and tenets of the Christians was met and defeated by this able and intellectual writer with great grace and effect. The 'Second Apology,' addressed to Marcus Aurelius Antoninus proceeds in a strain of argument which ought to have disabused a mind, so generally wise and informed, of its antichristian prejudices; but that mind was pre-occupied, and too confirmed in its errors by a long course of ill-directed study, to be set right by the clearest reasoning; and perhaps the Emperor, as well as the whole corps of sophists and moralists, which were then in such great credit, was rendered the more resentful against the apologist by his retention of the lay character, and the garb and habiliments of a Gentile philosopher. It is impossible not to hold in great veneration the memory of this excellent man, and to admire his fearless integrity, strong sense, and candid disposition, and those other estimable qualities and attainments which added an especial grace and lustre to the constancy of his adherence to the faith he had embraced, and his courage in the last hour of mortal conflict. But the effects of his early education and intercourse survived his conversion, and drew him aside from the plain dictates of Divine teaching towards the dogmas of a vain philosophy. In this bias towards the theology and ethics of the schools in Alexandria, where these subjects were treated after the manner of the heathen philosophers, Justin was imitated by Tatian and Athenagoras, the former of these well-intentioned but unsound and indiscreet apologists having been a scholar of the Martyr, and the latter a philosopher of Athens, who became a Christian by name and profession about the year 179, when Marcus Aurelius, surnamed Antoninus, was still on the seat of empire.

The error of these advocates of Christianity lay in their endeavours to pick out from the philosophical books of the heathens whatever was deemed excellent in itself, and to make use of it in argument for the support and embellishment of the true religion. But the effect of these associations was to bring the two systems under a forced combination, in which the genius and character of each were misrepresented. The great medium through which this spurious learning of heathen origin found its way into the pure belief of the Gospel was an academy of eclectic philosophers, of which the celebrated Ammonius Saccas, if not the originator, was the distinguished and effectual promoter. But this was to bring no new or accessory light into the mazes and labyrinths of human inquiry, but rather to multiply its reflections and refractions, so as to make things already sufficiently involved still more obscure and ambiguous. These matters were of very early occurrence in the history of the Church; but they belong to a time of vast and incalculable importance in the influence of its events on all the subsequent predicaments in which that Church has been placed, and all the characters in which it has come forth to the world. The sanguine project, which, however truly romantic and wild, had yet the semblance and credit of candour and moderation, of thus sifting and sorting the doctrines, tenets, and maxims of the ancient philosophers, was in its first essays confined within its proper bounds; but the principle was unfortunately adopted by the philosophical portion of the first converts to Christianity, and issued at length in a fond endeavour to make a sort of compromise between our holy faith and the metaphysical abstractions of presumptuous speculation. In these errors was laid the foundation of that unscriptural system generally indicated by the title of the New Platonic Theology, which, to effect the harmony which it pretended was at the bottom of all the various systems of opinions received among men, resorted to the plan of reducing all into agreement by the force of allegorical explanation. The ridiculous and revolting fables of the heathen mythology were shaded and veiled by the mystic fantasies deduced from Plato and his followers, and a theurgy operating by a demoniacal agency both on the creation and government of the world, brought a crowd of subordinates, under various names and offices, into the Christian dispensation.

It would be long indeed to enumerate the various ramifications of sottish error which this root of bitterness sent forth into the Christian world.

Hardly had our Lord withdrawn from this earth—having finished His work—when the counterwork of Satan was already in operation.

Alexandria, in Egypt, was the principal scene where vitiated understandings and licentious imaginations had their fullest scope and indulgence. The Gnostics and Docetæ had already occupied this ground, and exerted themselves with too much success to make the schools of that city the means of presenting Christianity to the world in a preposterous union with their vain and vicious reveries. Their wild and senseless dogmas, whereby the creative power was shared by beings whom their imaginations had called into existence, and the person of the Saviour reduced to a phantom, or degraded to mere humanity, wore away at last into something less revolting under the modifications of the Platonic systems, which towards the end of the first and through the second century, assumed the complete ascendency. The scholars of Ammonius, Plotinus, Porphyry, and other inheritors of the precepts of that specious philosopher, transmitted the dogmas of his school in a form with which, if Christianity was at all associated, it was the accessory, and not the principal. In Justin Martyr, Tatian, Athenagoras, Pantænus, and Clemens Alexandrinus, the Gospel of Christ was received as the primary, veritable, and only solace and security of the soul, while the principles of a philosophy grounded in pagan superstition, and inheriting the stains of its vicious origin, were admitted to exercise a secondary influence on their tenets and opinions, and to lend their illusive light in the interpretation of the written word.

When a considerate mind takes an impartial and comprehensive view of the state and fluctuations of religion in the two first centuries, it will be led to the conviction that, at no epoch in Church history, has our holy faith been assailed by an array of heresies more numerous and various, or more vitally subversive of the whole evangelical record; that to revert to this period as the pure age of antiquity, is to mistake its character, and that to look to those whom by custom and courtesy we call the Fathers of the Church, even in the first stage of its progress, as our unerring guides and directors, is the dotage of credulous, or the craft of designing, men. And most clear it is that an *Universal Visible Church* was not in existence upon earth during the period we have been contemplating.

The Oriental and Egyptian philosophy poured forth at the beginning of the second century their turbid streams into the sanctuary, carrying with them all the various chimeras and conceits of heresy and blasphemy to which the different forms of Gnostic extravagance gave birth. Of these vain and fantastic varieties of erratic absurdity, the principal professors and propagators were Saturninus, of Antioch; Cerdo, a Syrian; Marcion, the son of a bishop of Pontus; Basilides, of Alexandria; Carpocrates, likewise of Alexandria; and Valentinus, an Egyptian. All these agreed in the radical error of the Gnostics, the adoption of a complicated dynasty of deities, in the creation and control of the world, under whom a variety of supernatural beings had different provinces and superintendences assigned them, in all which matter and spirit were intermingled in strange confusion. Of these originators or patrons of nonsense, the most distinguished, by the success of their impostures, were Marcion and Valentinus. Of the former of these, the great lines of doctrine seemed to be that there were two first causes of all things, one good and the other evil; with one of an intermediate character brought into nearer connection with this lower world, physical and moral, as its architect and legislator: and as the Jewish fables were a part of the foundation of these Gnostic systems, this god of the material world was considered as more immediately concerned with the Jewish economy. To complete the senseless profanity of this system—if system it could be called—this plurality of deities was a source of perpetual discord,

"And gods met gods, and jostled in the dark."

It was the crowning part of these wicked and foolish conceptions, that, to terminate this conflict, Jesus Christ, the counterpart or Son of the Supreme, was sent to destroy His rivals, clothed with the mere umbration of a body, and incapable, therefore, of being hurt in the war He was to maintain with His enemies.

Valentinus was, in no point of absurdity or profanity, outdone by Marcion. This sottish system had its beginning at Rome, and with great rapidity extended itself in all directions east and west. His fables, in their general character and substance, varied little from the common trash of the Gnostics. Something, however, from the stock of his own vapid inventions, was added to the fund of their gross puerilities. His Æons, multiplied to thirty, included fifteen of either sex, and the Son of the Supreme, divided into Christ and Jesus, were, together with the Holy Spirit, the deities of the Divine pleroma, or heaven in contrast with matter, whose bounds were in the keeping of a being on whom the name of Horus was bestowed, as importing the business of his department.

It would be a waste of time and paper to spread before the reader the mysteries of iniquity which, soon after our Lord and His Apostles had left the earth, were forced into combination with their immaculate doctrines. Even the channels through which a purer teaching authentically flowed, in the life and lessons of those we dignify by the title of Fathers, partook too much of the leaven of these corruptions. Tatian, Athenagoras, Pantænus, Clemens of Alexandria, and Origen, were more or less diverted by their subtle influence from the simplicity of the Gospel faith. Tatian, who had been an orator by profession in the city of Rome, and owed his acquaintance with the truths of Christianity to the instructions of Justin Martyr, had proceeded in a steady course while under the guidance of that good confessor; but after his suffering for the faith, the opinions of Tatian betrayed a bias towards the heresies of Marcion and Valentinus. The common ground of superstition on which the Gnostics raised their ideal structures was in some measure assumed by Tatian. Omnipotence was divided into two divinities—a Supreme and a Creating God, and the Saviour represented under two forms, real and apparent, in conformity with some of the worst fancies of the Alexandrine philosophy. The excessive rigour of his tenets, excluding matrimony and all the social conveniences and comforts of life, was a consequence of his regarding matter as the origin of evil, and helped to lay the foundation of a false construction of society at variance with the positive declarations and manifest designs of a merciful Providence. Such an apologist of Christianity was Tatian.

Among the Platonising or philosophising Fathers of this time, who taught Christianity in the garb and character of a philosopher, was Athenagoras, a native of Athens, who, having visited the schools of Alexandria, was there converted to Christianity. The period in which he became distinguished as a teacher and catechist was about the middle of the second century—from 140 to 180. His intention at first being to write against the Christians, he was induced, for the execution of his purpose, to make himself acquainted with Holy Scripture, which proved the means of his conversion, and suggested his principal work, an 'Apology for the Christians,' which was succeeded by his 'Discourse on the Resurrection of the Dead.' His views of God and the Logos were full of the mystical philosophy of the day, and were as little characterised by sober thinking and submission to the Scripture warrant as were those of Tatian, or any other teacher or professor of the schools of the East. His reasoning, with the advantages of a graceful and elegant diction declarative of his Athenian culture, is lost in a cloud of dust and divinity—matter and spirit, angels and demons, religion and superstition, and the wisdom of revelation forced into fellowship with the vanity of the schools.

Pantænus was also one of the Fathers of the second century, and is numbered among the first who taught Christian divinity in the chair and dress of the philosopher—a man celebrated no less for his secular than for his sacred erudition, and distinguished as the instructor of Clemens Alexandrinus, but principally famous for his travels to carry the good news of the Gospel into the farthest east. He is said to have been remarkable for his predilection for the dogmas of the Stoics, and, when arrived at great distinction as a Christian teacher, to have retained the name and credit of a Stoical philosopher. No fragment of his writings remains ; but, as Origen commends him highly for his skill and profundity in philosophical speculations and theological inquiries, we have sufficient grounds, on the whole, to suspect that his writings, had they been preserved to us, would have proved him to be no very safe conductor through the Christian Scriptures, in the interpretation of which his industry and talents are said to have been eminently displayed. His life was extended to the beginning of the third century, having finished his useful course some time in the reign of the Emperor Caracalla.

The second century closed with some improvement in the learning and theology of the Alexandrine school of divinity, and it appears probable that the sounder views and more scriptural faith of Melito Bishop of Sardis, and Theophilus Bishop of Antioch, both of whom taught and wrote in the reigns of the Antonines, resisted the current of the Platonising philosophy, and threw some discredit on the wild theories of the Marcionites and Valentinians. The strenuous 'Apology or Defence of the Christians,' written by Melito, and dedicated to the Emperor

Marcus Aurelius, of which only a fragment is preserved by Eusebius, appeared in the year after Christ 170. Melito holds a prominent place among these early Fathers, on account of a journey made by him to the Holy Land for the purpose of ascertaining what were the genuine books of the Old Testament, the result of which inquiry, the first made by any Christian writer, was to authenticate the catalogue received from the Jews, except the Book of Esther, which might have been brought into doubt on account of some apocryphal additions, and Nehemiah, because, as is said, it was then comprehended under the name of the Book of Ezra. He is stated to have proved the extent and depth of his learning and judgment in treatises composed by him on various subjects, moral, philosophical, and divine.

Theophilus was the sixth, or, if we reckon St. Peter the first, the seventh Bishop of Antioch ; of pagan birth and education, well versed in Gentile philosophy, and in great esteem for his parts and learning. The period of his conversion is not recorded ; but it appears that he was ordained Bishop of Antioch about the year 170. His divinity was much freer from taint than that of many of his celebrated contemporaries. He was the author of several treatises written against the heresies of his times, especially those of Marcion and Hermogenes. Three books written by him with the design of confuting his friend Autolycus, a zealous champion of paganism, are still extant. They present us with a store of argument deduced from the phenomena of nature, demonstrating the presiding and disposing Hand of one Almighty Being, and the unfathomable depth of Divine wisdom in the regular course of the celestial bodies, the changes and returns of times and seasons, the generation of animals, the renovation of vegetables from seeds and plants, and the whole stupendous order of creation. From all which considerations he turns to the sacred writings, urging upon his friend the same profitable course, where he would find a way open to an exact knowledge of the truth. The doctrine of the resurrection, which is intimated to have been the great difficulty with his friend, he illustrates by analogies supplied in the visible phenomena of nature, and declares himself, by these and similar reflections, to have been led to the sanctuary of the Church, which God had set in the world as an island in the midst of the sea, unto which all the lovers of truth might fly as to a safe harbour, and escape the wrath and judgment to come.

In the midst of much to tarnish this period of Christian history, it is a refreshing change to turn to the testimonies which remain to us relating to this venerable Bishop of Antioch, who presented an orthodox front to the many extravagant theories by which Christianity was traduced in his time. According to Eusebius, he composed several catechetical discourses for the instruction and confirmation of Christians defective in knowledge and faith, and zealously opposed the heresy of Marcion, who asserted two deities, and of Hermogenes, who maintained the eternity of matter, among other fancies unworthy of mention. St. Jerom also bears testimony to the value of the writings of Theophilus, of which only his discourses with Autolycus remain to confirm his report. After thirteen years devoted by him to the edification of the Church as Bishop of Antioch, Theophilus passed peaceably out of life, having left a name than which few more honourable have belonged to the early Church. Whether Autolycus was ultimately gained to the truth by the arguments of Theophilus we have no information ; but as he appears to have been desirous of further communication, we may reasonably incline to the favourable opinion.

The name of the venerable Theophilus is rarely recorded without our being reminded that he was the first Christian author that applied the term Trinity to the triune Godhead.

In the same modest and circumspect walk with Theophilus moved the excellent Dionysius, Bishop of Corinth. Some few fragments of his Catholic Epistles to the Churches in different provinces of the Roman Empire have been saved to us by the care of Eusebius, which help to confirm the testimony of the historian to the pastoral care and orthodox labours of the pious bishop ; to which testimony may be added that of Jerom, by whom he is represented as deserving, by his Christian spirit and the useful direction of his eminent abilities, the regards of the Christian world. It remains in uncertainty whether his end was peaceable, or whether the crown of martyrdom was the reward of his perseverance.

We cannot better terminate this transient view of the school of Christ in the second century than with the character and labours of Irenæus, the date of whose birth rests in some uncertainty, but of whom it is well known that he lived through the greater part of the reigns of the Antonines, and that of Septimius Severus, under whose persecution, being the fifth to which the Christians had been exposed, he endured martyrdom, in the year 202, among a multitude of like sufferers, who perished at Lyons under the savage treatment of a lawless multitude, or by the hands of executioners. The numerous heresies, bewildering speculations, and impious fancies and inventions, which, in the first and second centuries, checked the progress of scriptural faith, and taught a Gospel which Christianity disowned, were by none more successfully combated than by this genuine maintainer of the written testimony. In the judgment of Tertullian, Irenæus was "*omnium doctrinarum curiosissimus explorator*," and Epiphanius calls him *μακαριώτατον καὶ ἁγιώτατον* Εἰρηναῖον, and by Erasmus he is styled "*magnus ille Ecclesiæ propugnator; pro sui nominis augurio, pacis Ecclesiæ vindex;*" but of his numerous works, his treatise against heretics, in five books, is almost the only one which has come down to us. The work was written in Greek; but we have only a barbarous translation of it in Latin, except a few fragments of the original which have been saved from oblivion by Epiphanius, Eusebius, and some other writers of ecclesiastical history.

Under this disadvantage, however, it is a most creditable and valuable relic. The Christian world is much indebted to it. The Gnostics and Valentinians were stripped of their disguises. Proarchè, and Bythos, Ennoia and Nous, Aletheïa and Zoē, and all the rabble of Æons were put to the rout, and made to abandon the field to that living record in which the law and the testimony are faithfully inscribed.[1]

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[1] To this very venerable Father the pure cause of Christianity was greatly indebted for many sound expositions of doctrine; and for none in a more eminent degree, than for his maintenance of the Saviour's ascension in the body of His flesh, identically the same with that in which His work of redemption was performed on this earth. This gracious truth, so full of consolation, and so supported and established by evidence, was assailed by heresy in various shapes of error; but by none of a more extravagant description than that of Apelles, a scholar of Marcion, whose heresy, according to Epiphanius, was this:—That our Lord, on His coming down from Heaven to earth, gathered to Himself a body from the four elements, in which he was truly sacrificed, and afterwards showed the same flesh to His disciples; and, having finished the dispensation of His incarnation, He restored to every one of the elements that which He had received from them; and so, dissolving his fleshly body, He ascended into the Heaven from whence He came. Epiphan. 'Adv. Hæres. in Hæres. Apell.' p. 167. See 'Epiphanii Opera Græce.' Fol. Basil. 1544. And Epiphanius himself thus explains this article of our faith:—"He ascended into Heaven, not

The persecution at Lyons was of the most lawless and sanguinary character. Twice was it allowed to riot unmitigated and unrestrained during the latter half of the second century; in the reign of Marcus Antoninus, and again under the sterner sway of Septimius Severus. Irenæus, who received his first instructions from Polycarp, became afterwards a presbyter of the Church of Lyons, under the episcopacy of Pothinus, and afforded his aid and counsel to that devout bishop till the year 178, when a brutal populace, excited to madness by their pagan priests, and left by the Emperor to the free exercise of their wanton and savage cruelty, were filling the streets of the city with spectacles of human suffering. Martyrdoms, memorable for their extreme barbarity, are recorded of this bloody persecution, and this under a philosophic prince, who permitted, without recoil or remorse, these tragedies and atrocities.

At the age of ninety the venerable Pothinus was exposed to every species of insult and personal injury which his worn out and tottering frame could be made to endure, till, being thrown into prison, he was in a few days withdrawn by death from the rage of his tormentors. The sufferings of the Christians upon this occasion are too harrowing and revolting for the ear of humanity to endure. All that the curiosity of malice could invent for aggravating the sufferings of its victims was in full exercise at Lyons during the continuance of this persecution, which however seems to have lasted for no long time. The Emperor Marcus died in 180, but the persecution, which was local, appears to have originated in a popular tumult and collision between the heathen and the Christian inhabitants of the

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divesting Himself of His Holy Body, but uniting it to a spiritual one." Epiphan. 'Anacephal.' p. 531.

From Theodoret we learn that Hermogenes, an ancient heretic, placed the body of the Saviour, after his leaving this earth, in the sun: *Οὗτος τοῦ Κυρίου σῶμα ἐν τῷ ἡλίῳ εἶπεν ἀποτεθῆναι* Theodoret, 'Dialog. et Hæres. Epitom. Græce.' Quart. Romæ, 1547. All this is met by the clause in the Creed, "He ascended into heaven;" and there "sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty." See this subject well considered and explained by Augustin. 'Augustini Opera,' v. 10. Oct. Lugduni, 1563. And 'De Fide et Symbol.' p. 190. The session at the Father's right hand is first found in the creeds of Tertullian, and was probably added expressly to oppose those who owned the ascension of the Saviour's body, but affirmed it to remain in an inert and effete state as a scabbard without a sword. Such a doctrine is condemned by this article, which assures us that our Mediator lives not regardless or inactive, but that He constantly exerts His power for the prosperity of His Church.

city, and probably expended itself in the transports of its own unmitigated fury.

The bishopric of Lyons, thus vacated by Pothinus, was conferred upon Irenæus on his return from Rome, whither he had been sent to Eleutherius, the bishop, to encounter some errors which had found their way into that see, and especially the heresy of Montanus. He began his responsible career as bishop of Lyons in 178, and remained in the exercise of that authority to the year 202, when the fifth persecution, which had broken out under the Emperor Severus, in 197, removed him from the scene of which he had been the life and ornament.

Between those periods, when the Church enjoyed an interval of comparative rest, Irenæus made a signal display of zeal and learning in the cause of evangelical truth, and showed much ability in the interpretation of the Holy Scriptures. His efforts to restore Christian peace and unanimity in the controversy respecting the time for holding the festival of Easter, by his synodical epistle in behalf of the Gallican Churches to Victor, the Roman pontiff, gave the lustre of Irenæus's name and virtue to the year of our Lord 197, and made him a conspicuous object of the persecution which was coming upon the worshippers of the Redeemer with renovated fury. After being twenty-four years bishop of Lyons, Irenæus sealed with his martyrdom his faithful administration of his pastoral duties during a period of much peril and tribulation. The closing scene came upon him with all the terrific apparatus of menace and torture. His name, his life, and his death, were in harmonious agreement. In none of the primitive confessors was the heroism of humble perseverance more vitally set forth in practice. For the relation of the massacre of the Christians, which numbered among its victims this venerable bishop, we are indebted to the narrative of Gregory of Tours. It is the only record which we possess of a transaction demonstrating, on one side, the lowest depth of depravity to which our fallen nature can be further degraded by license and encouragement, and, on the other, the elevation above ordinary humanity to which a witness for the truth can be lifted up, when the eye of faith looks to Him that is invisible, and weakness is made valiant by the succours of grace in the struggle of the last conflict.

If Irenæus, as an interpreter of Scripture, was too addicted to the allegorical method, of which the early Christian writers were so enamoured, and which, doubtless, was a fruitful source of the errors of arbitrary interpretation, his service in defending truth from the inroads of a profane philosophy entitles him to a place among the most faultless of those whom we honour with the title of Fathers. But this philosophising spirit, whatever check it may have received from the sober pen of Irenæus, still occupied the school of Alexandria, wherein Clemens Alexandrinus, a scholar of Pantænus, the founder of that school as a channel of Christian doctrine, recommended it by his various learning, and the vivacity of his comprehensive research. It is due, however, to this patristical writer to admit that the use to which his philosophy was directed was the conversion of the heathen; and for this purpose his 'Stromata,' or tapestry-work, was written, wherein his memory and his genius were both laid out in a varied tissue of expanded illustration and argument. The date of his birth does not so clearly appear; but it seems that his book called 'Stromata' was produced about the year 200, so that this Father may be said properly to belong to the third century, his life having extended to the reign of Heliogabalus, or Alexander Severus, about the year of our Lord 220.

A feeling of favour towards the heathen philosophy, and especially to that of Plato, betrayed many of the ancient Fathers into the pernicious habit of perverting the meaning of Scripture to bring it to an accordance with their prejudices. They were thereby rendered both obscure and partial in their interpretations. It happened, too, that the exposition of the sacred books fell principally into the hands of these philosophising Christians; Pantænus, the master of the Alexandrine school, and Clemens Alexandrinus, being reputed to be the first Christians who were occupied in this service. Clemens, in a work of which no copy has come down to these times, called 'Hypotyposes,' is said to have exercised himself in expounding detached passages from various parts of Scripture; but the specimens which have reached us of the exegetical powers of the writers of the primitive ages forbid us to deplore the oblivion into which a large proportion of these early interpretations of the sacred oracles have fallen.

When we make an unprejudiced estimate of the arguments and opinions of antiquity on Scripture doctrines, the favour with which these early Fathers are regarded by the self-called Catholics of the present day ought not to surprise us. The ambiguous matter of their pages, with a little pains, may be borrowed to countenance almost any opinions.

We are informed by Epiphanius that Clemens was called both an Athenian and an Alexandrian; having, as some say, been born and bred in Athens, whence he derived his fondness for the Greek philosophy, and after much travelling, having settled chiefly at Alexandria in Egypt, where he dispensed the accumulations of his varied erudition. He appears to have sought instruction under a succession of teachers, and to have laboured, rather diffusively than profoundly, in the acquisition of knowledge. He succeeded Pantænus, his last instructor, as catechist in the Christian school of Alexandria, a duty which his extensive learning enabled him to discharge with great success and celebrity; and to him belonged the credit of being the preceptor of Origen, in whose capacious and excursive mind the multifarious learning of the master exhibited a growth perhaps somewhat too luxuriant. Clemens was, from a catechist in the school, raised to the dignity of a presbyter in the Church of Alexandria; in which important character his 'Stromata,' composed with a loose play of hostility turning itself in all directions, assailed both Greeks and barbarians, heathens and heretics, with weapons borrowed from sources sacred and profane. In this work his bias towards the commonplaces of the school philosophy was apparent, and his genius was often wasted in idle and unsound speculation. It does not appear that he attached himself to any peculiar sect; but, asserting an eclectic freedom of choice, he picked out of various systems the dogmas which appeared to him to be most capable of an alliance with Christian verities. He had declared in his 'Stromata' that to fly from impending danger was not only lawful, but justifiable on the ground of Christian prudence, and, in consistency with this opinion, he quitted his catechetical office, and fled from Alexandria into Asia Minor, during the persecution of 202, in the reign of Severus.

Clemens was a man in great esteem throughout the learned and religious world, and is styled by Jerom the most learned of the ancients. We have three of his books extant to manifest the extent of his industry and knowledge; his 'Pædagogue, or Christian Instructor,' his 'Stromata,' and his exhortation or 'Admonition to the Greeks or Gentiles,' works in which, if there are many things to be admired, there are also many things which pure Christianity disowns. His great and misleading propensity to overrate the importance of the philosophy of Plato and the Stoics, led him, as has been already intimated, to a course of reasoning which made his performances of very dubious authority in matters of doctrine. His 'Stromata,' written without the smallest regard to method, is comprised in seven books; the superadded book, called the eighth, being properly a treatise by itself, having for its title, *Τίς ὁ σωζόμενος πλούσιος;*[1] i.e. 'What rich man can be saved?' Small as this last treatise is, it is of value as containing various citations from the New Testament, and to some extent tending to confirm its authenticity.

The book formerly known under the name of the 'Hypotyposes of Clemens,' a few fragments of which are found in Eusebius[2] and Photius,[3] is worthy of no consideration. It professed to be an explanation of all parts of Scripture, and appears, in very many instances, to have contained doctrines corrupt and impious, and entirely opposed to the generally sound character of the other writings of Clemens. There is good reason to consider the work as borrowing the name of that Father to gain for itself a credit which it ill deserved.[4] This work is lost, except some passages of it preserved by Eusebius, who says, speaking of Clemens, that in the books called 'Hypotyposes,' he wrote some short commentaries on all the books of Scripture, not omitting even the controverted books, the Epistle of Barnabas, and that called the Revelation of St. Peter. If writing short commentaries upon those books could be regarded as showing an acquiescence in their genuineness, there would be reason enough, on that account only, to regard the 'Hypotyposes' with great mistrust; but the book contained many impious opinions among some of a better tendency. It asserted matter to be eternal; Christ to be a creature; the existence of many worlds before the birth of Adam; that the angels had commerce with women; that Christ was not made flesh, but only appeared to be so; with other equally foolish blasphemies—heresies, with one or other of which few in that age, even among the philosophising Fathers, were wholly untainted. But all this notwithstanding, the book was attributed to Clemens Alexandrinus by Origen, Eusebius, Jerom, and others of the Fathers.

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[1] This small tract was published by Bishop Fell at Oxford in 1683. Eusebius, in 'Hist. Eccl.' lib. III. c. 23, cites this as a work of Clemens, under the title in the text; and Photius also, in Cod. III. says the first seven of the 'Stromata' had the same title, but the eighth differed, being entitled in some copies 'What rich man can be saved?'

[2] 'Hist. Eccl.' lib. I. c. 12; lib. II. c. 1, 9, 15; lib. VI. c. 14.

[3] Cod. 109.

[4] [See Jones on the Canon, vol. I. pt. ii. c. 36, who seems to prove conclusively that Clemens could not be the author.—Ed.]

In speaking of the genuine productions of Clemens Alexandrinus, we ought not to omit the value of his indirect testimony to the genuineness of the Gospels of the four Evangelists. Of the false doctrine of the unlawfulness of marriage, found in the Gospel of the Egyptians, he says, "I observe this is not in either of the *four* Gospels delivered to us, but in the Gospel according to the Egyptians." And as his frequent citations from the Gospels are only from the four which we receive, we cannot suppose him to mean any other. And we may further observe, that in citing St. Paul's speech at Athens, he introduces it with these words, "So St. Luke, in the Acts of the Apostles, relates what Paul said," &c.

Tertullian, to whom our attention is naturally next called, is equally an authority for the limitation of the number of the genuine Gospels to four. In speaking of the four Gospels, after naming them, he says, "*Nobis fidem ex Apostolis Joannes et Matthæus insinuant, ex Apostolicis Lucas et Marcus instaurant.*" There is, indeed, hardly anything in the writings of these primitive Fathers more valuable to their posterity than the confirmation afforded by them to the claims of our canonical books of Scripture to be received as genuine productions of their reputed authors. This is not only proved by inference from their quotations, but by the information we derive from them of what was read as Scripture in the assemblies or churches of the primitive Christians.

Tertullian is said to have been of pagan parentage, his father having been a proconsular centurion. He was born at Carthage, and, according to some accounts, in the year 160; but the time of his death is variously stated. We have the authority of Jerom for assigning to him a very long existence, protracted to the middle of the third century, when, at the age of ninety or thereabouts, he terminated a life of extraordinary activity and zeal in the cause of Christianity against Jews and heathens, and in defence of the orthodox faith against the heresies of Marcion, Valentinus, Praxeas, and Hermogenes. If he lived till about the year 246, as some say, he must have survived two persecutions of the Christians, the fifth, under Severus, and the sixth, under Maximin, which, considering his open and courageous maintenance of the Gospel, and his tract, 'De Fuga in Persecutione,' against retreating from persecution, may be looked upon as an extraordinary circumstance. He was a man of a fervid and impetuous mind, impelled rather than directed by zeal in the cause of Divine truth ; and when his excesses and aberrations are taken into the due estimation of his Christian course, it would be difficult to decide whether good or evil had the ascendency, or whether, in the balance of the sanctuary, his piety or perversity was predominant in effect. His works were numerous, and on each of them there was the stamp of vehement thought and the brilliance of a highly-wrought imagination. But the unvaried sentence of sound criticism has fixed on the style of Tertullian the reproach of affectation, artifice, bad taste, and obscurity. In the beginning of Severus's reign the renunciation of the heathenism in which he was born and bred, and his introduction by baptism into Christian membership, brought Tertullian into the field, fully armed, by long previous discipline and the preparation of the most refined education, for contending for the faith of the saints. He is said to have been exercised in the Forum as an advocate by profession till his conversion to Christianity ; after which he was made a presbyter at Carthage, where he spent his long and laborious life. It was probably the too natural tendency of his early studies and occupations to give to his compositions a coarse and aggressive style. He was, however, accomplished in Greek and Roman literature, and less guilty of the adulterous mixture of heathen ethics and philosophy with sacred and saving truth than the Fathers in general of the African schools in the second and third centuries. About the beginning of the persecution in Severus's reign he put forth four treatises, which manifested his resolution at least, however defective they may be considered in temper, in moderation, or in charity. The subjects of these compositions were penance, prayer, baptism, and patience, to which, not long after, were added two others concerning the dresses and decorations of the female sex, in which he comes forth with no little severity and preciseness in his censorial character.

It was at the close of the second, or the commencement of the third, century, when a crisis was approaching in which the supernatural strength of Christian perseverance was to be tried in the fire of persecution, that Tertullian published his celebrated 'Apology.' The vigour of this performance and the reasoning powers displayed in it have called upon the Christian world in all ages for its admiration and acknowledgments. In none of the apologies—under which title the primitive Christians were defended from the calumnies of their enemies, does truth assert her innocence in a tone of more conscious indignation. His treatise, entitled an 'Exhortation to the Martyrs,' addressed to the Christians in prison to animate and confirm them in their dying conflicts, and his 'Scorpiacus,' intended as an antidote to the poison of such as attempted to dissuade the Christians from suffering martyrdom, are monuments of the inflexible principles as well as the warm sensibilities of this eminent person. His tract written to dissuade the Christians from attending the public spectacles and diversions of Rome, and his book 'De Idololatria,' were worthy, in many respects, of his great character. But the sternness and rigour of his expressions and sentiments have made it supposed that they were written after he had adopted the errors of Montanus, under the shades of whose apostasy his austerity became sullen and severe, and his moral perceptions dim and obscure.

It was not a little extraordinary that a man endowed with so penetrating a capacity as Tertullian should have been captivated and enthralled by so wild and weak an enthusiast as Montanus; but he may perhaps be considered as belonging to that numerous class whose quick and irritable nature so impedes the exercise of their understanding as to put them in subjection to others who occupy a very inferior grade in the ranks of intelligence. Montanus, a native of a little town in Mysia, on the borders of Phrygia, was probably prompted by that restless longing for distinction which seeks its gratification at any cost of principle or honesty, and by which, perhaps, those men have at all times been more or less actuated who disdain to be taught by evidence or experience, and delight in the reputation of discovery, when in truth their opinions have nothing but extravagance to recommend them. With an imagination wholly undisciplined, and proceeding from one assumption to another, more and more entangled in his own vain and preposterous notions, from an enthusiast he became at length little better than a maniac, falling furiously upon the whole Christian Church for not acknowledging his absurd and blasphemous pretensions. His entire admission of the Divine authority of the Scriptures was very favourable to his impostures. Without disputing any doctrines considered catholic, his plan and purpose was to make such use of them as might render them subservient to his own aims at personal exaltation, and, by a profane application of them to himself individually, to adopt them as the foundation of his fraudulent system. Assuming to be himself the special object of Divine grace and illumination, he proceeded to promulgate his own plan of spiritual legislation ; to proclaim fasts, to alter usages, to prescribe penances, to prohibit marriages, to allow divorces, to excommunicate at pleasure, and to extort money from his followers, in the name of offerings, which he used in the support of a machinery of agents and officers for the promotion of his designs. Such was the success of his knavery that his deluded followers at length avouched him to be the very Comforter Himself. The unusual rigours and mortifications on which he insisted were probably that part of his system which recommended it to the notice, and finally to the adoption, of Tertullian—a notable instance of the triumph of weakness over strength ; weakness in its frowardest state of inflated arrogance—strength dissipated and misdirected by temper, imagination, and feeling, impatient of guidance, and disdaining to move with the many.

It was after Tertullian had become a Montanist that he gave to the Christian world his treatise against Marcion, consisting of five books. It is a work in which his genius scattered in profusion the beauties of thought and the brilliancies of expression, and which has laid a great obligation upon those who desire to be brought into better acquaintance with the affinity and correspondence which unite the Old and New Testaments into one entire record, emanating from the same source, and conspiring to the same end.

It was before he was fifty years old, and with his mental powers in their full vigour, that this defection of Tertullian from the simplicity of the Gospel took place ; and it is remarkable that, with his mind under this infatuation, he still, with great soundness of argument, maintained the fundamental truths of the Saviour's incarnation, the distinction of Persons in the Trinity, and the essential unity of the Godhead.

The fifth persecution of the Christians, which began near the conclusion of the second century, was continued in Africa to the end of the reign of Severus, who died in 211, and was extended through a portion of the reign of Caracalla his son, during which Tertullian persevered in his course as a champion of the faith, conspicuous no less for his courage and constancy, than for his reaching in safety, through periods of so much peril, a peaceful close of his life and labours. The account of the Christian martyrdoms under this persecution presents a detail of human suffering from which the mind, even at this distance of time, turns with thrilling horror. It produced from the pen of Tertullian a book addressed to Scapula, the Roman proconsul of the province, wherein the vigilant and valiant presbyter, exalted by his feelings above the fear of consequences, cast himself between the slaughterers and their victims. His arguments upon this occasion became the dignity of his character, and have handed down to us a memorable instance of the intrepidity of a pure conscience, and the magnanimity which waits upon the Christian's hope. Tertullian saw the end of this persecution, which closed with the reign of Septimius Severus, and witnessed the short trial to which Christian faith and fortitude was again submitted in the reign of Maximin, the murderer and successor of Alexander Severus. His book, 'De Corona Militis,' deserves especial mention as a work of his old age, and testifying to the perennial vigour and efflorescence of his abilities in an advanced period of bodily decay. This treatise is thought to have been written about the beginning of the reign of Maximin. On a day of public sports, when a donative was bestowed upon the army, each soldier, on receiving the present, was required to wear a laurel crown. A Christian soldier refused to wear it, but carried it in his hand. For this refusal, in which he persisted, he gave as his reason, his conversion to Christianity. He was stripped of his ornaments, cruelly scourged, and cast into prison, where he lay in hourly expectation of martyrdom. The other Christian soldiers disapproved of his conduct as a needless provocation and insult; but Tertullian openly undertook his defence in the tract last mentioned, wherein he not only extolled the zeal and heroism of the man, but further asserted that a Christian soldier was forbidden by his profession to wear a military crown, or carry arms. In such an attitude of constancy did this aged protester stand before the sceptre of imperial despotism, and the proud array of its conquering eagles.

It appears that it was not till the reign of Philip, about the year 245, that Tertullian became dissatisfied with the Montanists. His uncomplying disposition had not become less rigid by age. In great decrepitude of body, but with a spirit not subdued or softened, he persisted in his schismatic course, holding his assemblies at Carthage, and founding a congregation of separatists, which lasted to the days of Augustin.

The manner and exact time of the death of Tertullian are unknown, which, considering in how much stir and tumult his life was spent, and how long his protracted energies kept the eyes of the world upon him, may be looked upon as somewhat extraordinary; but all that belongs to the history of this person was of a character peculiar and striking. His pagan education seems to have been complete, and his general attainments very considerable. His temper, as in his own book on Patience he seems to acknowledge, was irritable, and the acerbity of his pen was, by his own acknowledgment, exercised, during his ignorance of the truth, in vehement attacks upon the religion of the Gospel. He seemed eminently qualified to uphold, by his bold and vigorous genius and sagacity, the superstition of his ancestors, to which, by his early addiction to the public festivals and games, and especially to the bloody sports of the amphitheatre, he was naturally attached. His appetites were unrestrained, and he seems to have been given to the grossest excesses. The particulars of his conversion are unrecorded. It was a transformation. The power of grace in arresting the impetuosity of passion and affection, and reversing their current and direction, has in few instances been more marvellously displayed. In his treatise on the 'Powers of the Soul,' this extraordinary man, once so sunk in heathen iniquities and abominations, observes of the children of heathen parents, that from their conception they were devoted to the demons, and relates the impure and disgusting rites which were used in that dedication.

The author of the 'Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,' after quoting a vehement passage of Tertullian in illustration of his point, has reckoned the alarm which was awakened in the heathen mind by "the menace of eternal torment" among the causes of the progress and success of the Christian religion. He remarks that "the condemnation of the wisest and most virtuous of the pagans, on account of their ignorance or disbelief of the Divine truth, seems to offend the reason and humanity of the present age. But the primitive Church, whose faith was of a much firmer consistence, delivered over, without hesitation, to eternal torture the far greater part of the human species."[1] "These rigid sentiments," Mr. Gibbon thinks, "were unknown to the ancient world." Yet the superstition of that ancient world was, at the time that Tertullian was giving utterance to the "rigid sentiments" so offensive to the charitable historian, consigning to torments, as men out of the pale of mercy, the maintainers of the doctrines of the Gospel. Neither, as he faintly confesses, is the reproach thus thrown by him on the whole primitive Church historically correct, as will appear to the intelligent reader of the writings of Justin Martyr and Clemens of Alexandria.

The passage which he quotes from Tertullian, and which is taken from his treatise, 'De Spectaculis,' furnishes a specimen of that Father's style of writing in his more vehement expostulations, though affording but small support to the historian's reasoning. "You are fond of spectacles," exclaims the stern Tertullian; "expect the greatest of all spectacles, the last and eternal judgment of the universe! How shall I admire, how laugh, how rejoice, how exult, when I behold so many proud monarchs and fancied gods groaning in the lowest abyss of darkness! so many magistrates who persecuted the Name of the Lord liquefying in fiercer fires than they ever kindled against the Christians! so many sage philosophers blushing in red-hot flames with their deluded scholars! so many celebrated poets trembling before the tribunal, not of Minos, but of Christ! so many tragedians, more tuneful in the expression of their own sufferings! so many dancers!" Here the sarcastic historian breaks off his adroit quotation, having taken his advantage of the intemperate warmth of the good Father to gain credit to the second in the list of the five causes to which he mainly attributes the success of the Christian religion—the threatenings and denunciations of its martyrs and confessors.

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[1] Gibbon, c. 15, § 3.

It must be confessed that the style of this extraordinary man, which the specimen above presented too correctly exemplifies, was not that which it best becomes a Christian to assume, especially one to whom the memory of his own indefensible early career ought surely to have dictated a milder tone in dealing with those who had yielded to temptations of which he had himself experienced the peril and the plague.

Tertullian, on leaving the occupations of the Forum, put off the habit of the bar to assume a garb more characteristic of his new course of life, a proceeding which he defended against the remarks of his censurers in his tract 'De Pallio,' a product of that sarcastic vein in which it was the frequent gratification of his genius to indulge.

By Minucius Felix, his contemporary, the forensic gown was retained; but the moral effects of his conversion to Christianity appeared in his temperate treatise, written, as it seems, about the time when the tract 'De Pallio' issued from the pen of Tertullian. It had the title of 'Octavius,' being in the form of a dialogue between Octavius, a Christian, and Cæcilius, a pagan, Minucius sitting as arbiter; wherein the disputation is conducted in a perspicuous and graceful manner. The work, which has happily been preserved to us, if it does not repel the calumnies heaped upon the Christian profession with the indignant vehemence of Tertullian's 'Apology,' is far beyond it in the graces of composition.

If the Church was vindicated and benefited by the 'Apology' of this stern defender of its character against the aspersions of the pagans, the charges he brought against it after he became a Montanist went far towards cancelling the merit of his services. The malice of the heathens, and especially of the philosophers, which, without any respect for truth, had accused the Christians of crimes exceeding the highest measures of human guilt, derived a sort of countenance from the latitude which Tertullian allowed himself, when under the influence of the extravagant pretensions of Montanus, in his impeachment of the moral practices of the Christians. The Gnostics, Valentinians, Marcionites, and others, might have merited his severest censures; but his resentments hardly stopped to discriminate between the heretic and the orthodox. The pagan adversary was glad to be furnished, by the reproaches interchanged by Christians of conflicting opinions, with weapons for a general attack upon Christianity itself.

Notwithstanding his errors and aberrations, we cannot bring Tertullian before us without an impression of gratitude and veneration. He was always vigilant in the defence of the faith, till his ardent and excitable mind, irritated by perpetual collision, hurried him, beyond the bounds of self-control and moderation, into that intoxicating element of self-exaltation in which the understanding waits upon a distempered fancy, and sees everything through an obscure medium of prejudice and egotism.

It is very difficult to collect from the Christian expositors and apologists of this period what was the essential condition of Christian worshippers, and how far their different communities were held together by a correspondence of doctrine and discipline. The heresies of the second and third centuries presented every form of apostasy and schism to which vanity, caprice, or fanaticism could give birth, and in his 'Prescriptions against Heretics,' Tertullian, with no little confidence in his own strength, took the field against them. Policy—it may be conviction—drew from him, in the work last mentioned, a representation of the state of Church Communion, which gives to it an appearance of consolidation in its various societies and administrations. "Run through the Apostolic Churches in which are the seats once filled by the Apostles, where their epistles are read and their voices and persons represented. In Achaia, you have the Church of Corinth; in Macedonia, you have the Church at Philippi and Thessalonica; in Asia, you have Ephesus; and in Italy there is Rome, an authority to which we can readily appeal. Thrice happy Church, which the Apostles impregnated with all their doctrine and with their blood! In Rome Peter was crucified, after the manner of our Lord, and Paul beheaded like the Baptist. It was in Rome that the Apostle John was cast unhurt into a caldron of boiling oil, and was afterwards sentenced to banishment in Patmos."[1]

Notwithstanding these praises of the Church from the pen of Tertullian, the laxity afterwards imputed by him to its members induced his separation from it, and led him to enrol himself among the followers of Montanus, whose pretensions to extraordinary gifts of the Holy Spirit won his belief, and whose exterior austerity confirmed in his eyes the sanctity they assumed. As the same Church now became to him an object of angry reprehension, we are by no means enabled to appreciate its character at the time we are contemplating by the testimony of Tertullian. Still less can we rest in the special eulogy bestowed in the passage above cited on the Church of Rome. In his treatise on Chastity he censures, in terms of great indignation and disgust, the infamous claims which, even at that time, had begun to be asserted by the Roman bishop. It is thus that he speaks of a decree issued by that authority: "The chief Pontiff, forsooth, the Bishop of bishops, thus speaks, 'I absolve penitents from the sin of adultery and fornication.' O edict to which we cannot append a Well done!"[1]

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[1] Tertull. 'De Præscript. Hær. Op.' tom. I. p. 245, ed. Lutet. 1634.

It appears that Tertullian had received what was by him considered as ill-usage from the Bishop of Rome and his clergy, and Jerom ascribes his lapse into Montanism to his feelings of resentment. "*Invidia et contumeliis clericorum ecclesiæ Romanæ ad Montani dogma delapsum.*" Thus, says Dr. Jortin, he lost the title of *saint*, a title which has been often as wretchedly bestowed as other titles and favours.

That his sanguine temper disposed him to excessive credulity there is but too much reason to conclude from the many extraordinary accounts which are to be found in his pages. The figure of a city with its surrounding wall suspended in the air was probably built of materials furnished by the quarry of Tertullian's creative imagination.[2] Of this, however, he maintains the substantial entity, which he confirms by heathen testimony. The story of the immersion of the Apostle John in a caldron of boiling oil, from which he escaped, and was afterwards banished, seems to have had its origin in the testimony of Tertullian.[3] His view of the birth of the soul accorded with the strange dogma entertained by some of the Fathers, which derived it *ex traduce*, as it was technically expressed, viewing it as propagated in a natural course of generation from parent to child; while others made it the product of a distinct creation, having an existence posterior to the body. It was a theological question—very fruitless and very presumptuous—on which much controversy among the Fathers of the third and fourth centuries was idly expended. Tertullian was much infatuated on this subject, and not only in some sense maintained the corporeity of the soul, but lent an ear to an idle story of its actual and visible appearance.[1] Other notions and doctrines held by Tertullian repugnant to the orthodox faith were irreverently asserted, and in opposition to the clear current of the Scriptures. His utter and hopeless exclusion of certain transgressors from Church communion, his unqualified denunciation of second marriages, his separation from his own wife on grounds inconsistent with the relative duties of Christian society, his adoption of the profane and chimerical hypothesis of the carnal commerce of angels, but too common an opinion among the Fathers of the third and fourth centuries, were errors and stains in the Christianity of Tertullian which subtract much from the solidity of his writings and the weight of his authority. We must also withhold from him the praise of Christian urbanity, and that decent candour which rectifies the process, without relaxing the tone, of argument. In his book against Marcion he descends into palpable and personal abuse. And when our fancy brings him before us in his assumed pallium or garb of the philosopher, we can hardly help applying to him the words of Herodes Atticus, "*Video barbam et pallium; philosophum nondum video.*"[2]

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[1] [Tertull. 'Op.' tom. I. p. 715, Lutet. 1634. "'Ego et mœchiæ et fornicationis delicta, pœnitentia functis dimitto.' O edictum! cui adscribi non poterit Bonum factum!"—ED.]

[2] Contr. Marc. iii. 24.

[3] Id. p. 311.

In truth, his philosophy was no better evinced by his pallium or Greek surtout, than his Christianity by the sign of the cross, of the efficacy of which he seems to have been the discoverer.[3] Upon the whole, it is not on the canvas of Tertullian that we see represented an universal visible Church. He expatiates much on the union of the Christian congregations in his time, but he did not himself proceed in a course of conduct calculated to promote or consolidate such union. His own consistency was not such as to induce us to adopt his views of the just exemplar of a visible confederate church founded on a comprehensive conformity of faith and practice.

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[1] 'De Anima,' 311; 'Op.' tom. I. Lutet. Jerom and the Fathers agreeing with him, maintain that the soul was created immediately, at the instant of its union with the body: 'Comm. on Eccl.' c. 12 et Ep. 61. The subject was only fit for persons who have not the proper value for what is comprehended in the term *ἀκενόσπουδον*, as used by Marcus Antoninus.

[2] See Aul. Gellius, lib. IX. c. 2.

[3] Tertull. 'Apol.' c. 16, and 'De Corona Militis,' c. 3, p. 122. See Cyprian, 'Testim. adv. Judæos,' lib. II. c. 21, 22, p. 294, and Lactantius, 'Inst.' lib. IV. c. 27, 28.

Commodus had reigned about six years, when Origen was born. His life, which was extended through a period of seventy years, from A.D. 185 to 254, or 255, was exposed to the peril of three persecutions, all which he survived, to make a quiet surrender of his soul to Him to whom that soul had long been devoted, and in whose cause he had suffered much, and had proved himself well prepared to suffer the loss of all things. His father, Leonidas, had shown him the way, having been beheaded for his faith when the son was about seventeen years of age. If Alexandria was not the place of his birth, it was certainly the first scene of his Christian activity. Some indeed say that he was born in the mountainous parts not far from Alexandria, and support their opinion by an inference from his name, which seems appropriate to a person born upon a mountain or among mountains. He had a great advantage over many of the early Fathers, in deriving his existence from Christian parents; so that from a child he was made acquainted with the Holy Scriptures. His youthful studies were carried on with unexampled assiduity under the teaching of Clemens Alexandrinus, then the catechist of Alexandria, and his mind, prepared and furnished, was farther conducted into the recesses of a philosophy, wherein things divine and human were intermingled in an unintelligible and irreconcilable confusion, by the celebrated Ammonius Saccas. The surname of Adamantius appears to have been given him to denote his invincible devotedness to the cause of sacred truth, for the sake of which he submitted to a course of voluntary mortification, continued through a life which may be regarded as remarkably long when all the circumstances which had a tendency to shorten it are duly considered. All the advantages of erudite instruction seem to have been his from early youth. It could not have been otherwise under the tuition of Clemens Alexandrinus, who has recorded his opinion of the great value of the Gentile literature, as serving first to water and soften the earthy parts of the soul, that, as the soil is prepared to receive the seed from the hand of the husbandman, so the spiritual seed may be better and more vitally sown in the mind by a similar process. We are the less, therefore, to wonder at what Jerom relates of him,—that he read public lectures in science, philosophy and the various branches of secular discipline.

Although the judgment of Clemens in considering these attainments, and especially the philosophy of the heathen schools, as preparing the mind for advancement in spiritual knowledge, has not the support of general experience, yet, in the case of Origen, it is certain they did not prevent his reaching an eminence as an expounder of Scripture, and a master of theological learning, above all his contemporaries; such as to draw to him from Jerom (not a partial judge) the praise of being "*sacrorum omnium expositorum victor*," and from Erasmus the title of "*Theologorum sine controversia princeps*." Still, however, the deficiency of this foundation to sustain the superstructure of spiritual truth and pure divinity was very apparent in the theology and learning of Origen.

In the year of our Lord 202, when the Christians were persecuted under the Emperor Severus, Origen, then about the age of seventeen, lost his father Leonidas, who sealed his testimony by his blood. He is said to have desired earnestly to share the fate of his parent in the same cause, and would have invited his martyrdom, had not his mother, to prevent his leaving the house, concealed his clothes. His intention being thus frustrated, he wrote to his father to exhort him to die courageously, and not to suffer his constancy to be shaken by tenderness for his wife and children ; an act which, if it has the praise of Christian heroism, ordinary humanity would be inclined to spare. The execution of Leonidas was followed by the total confiscation of his property, by which his wife and children were thrown upon the exertions of the son, who supported them by giving lessons in grammar. In this occupation of private teaching he continued some little time, with great success and reputation, till he was placed in the chair as public instructor in Christian theology, to supply the vacancy made by the desertion of the city under the persecution to which the Christians were at that time exposed. It was at the age of eighteen that Origen was appointed by Demetrius, the Bishop of Alexandria, to preside in the catechetical schools, where the principles of the

Christian faith were authoritatively expounded. In this important office the fame of Origen became widely extended. His converts were very numerous, among whom seven are recorded to have suffered martyrdom. During this interval the visits of Origen to the Christians in prison were very frequent, as were his attendances on them at the moment of their last sufferings, to the extreme peril of his own life, which he further hazarded by continuing his instructions and exhortations to the numerous hearers who still attended upon him. Two of his female converts, Rais and Potamiæna, have left in the Church the odour of their sacrifice, signalised by sufferings among the most terrific which inventive cruelty has been able to inflict.

Severus died in 211, and the Church of Christ had an interval of rest. From this time the lectures of Origen in the school of Alexandria were prosecuted with great energy and success for several years, suspended only for a short period during his visit to Rome, while Zephyrine was bishop of that city. On his return to Alexandria, his labours were so increased, that he found it necessary to divide them with Heracles, who had been his scholar, and was afterwards promoted to the bishopric of that city. Now was felt the full effect of the intermixture of pagan notions with the pure doctrines of Christianity. Fostered by the abilities of this extraordinary man, the impression became very general everywhere within the range of his instructions, that the principles of the Christian religion were not fundamentally at variance with the maxims and opinions of the most refined and elevated heathen philosophy, which was in truth of Divine origin, and never intended to be superseded by Christianity, but, on the contrary, designed to become its associate and coadjutrix when purified from its foreign corruptions and defilements. This dangerous error had been patronised by Clemens, who seemed to suppose that the truths of the Christian revelation lay hid in the folds of the Greek philosophy, awaiting the research of the diligent and patient inquirer. To this system, prolific of a multiplied progeny of error, may be traced many false and fatal opinions which have, to the present hour, maintained an obstinate hold upon the froward human heart, and may be recognised among the mystical formularies and doctrines of the Church of Rome. It was an amphibious plan of teaching, in which much of celestial wisdom was forced into an alliance with human thoughts and inventions. A false estimate of the true character of Christian doctrine induced the persuasion that something of dignity was added to it by mixing it with the dogmas of the schools, so full of terms of high sound and import; and Origen was probably drawn to this method of instruction by the influence it gave him with his recent converts, and such of his hearers as were still halting between the reveries of Plato and the revelation of Christ.

Had Origen been the hero of a biography composed after the fashion of our times, no recorded life would be fuller of incidents; but history has let much of him slip out of remembrance, and the memorial of his works has in great part perished with him. Enough remains to show that the scope and perseverance of his studies were such as to raise his reputation as a scholar and divine far above all that his age and time could boast. Being relieved by Heracles of some part of his public labour, he applied with extraordinary diligence to the investigation of Holy Scripture; and so prodigious were his powers of sustaining the fatigues of study, that the Latin surname of Adamantius became his regular title, to which were sometimes added the Greek appellatives of Χαλκέντερος and Συντακτικὸς, to denote the robust constitution of his mind, and the rapid succession in which his compositions flowed from his pen. Assisted by Huillus, a Jewish patriarch of that time, he acquired, what was generally wanting in the Fathers of the Church, a knowledge of the Hebrew tongue, and spread around him the fruits of his mathematical and philosophical studies. This expansion of his plan of instruction brought to his school a crowd of heathens and heretics intermingled with his Catholic auditors; and among his triumphs in the cause of orthodoxy was his recovery from the errors of Marcion and Valentinus of Ambrosius, one of the richest and noblest of his hearers, who became the constant companion of his studies and learned recreations, and ended his days a martyr under the Decian persecution. About the year 214 Origen compiled his celebrated work, comprising four different Greek versions of the Old Testament, divided into verses, and placed in four distinct columns answering to one another, and contained in the same page. In the first column he placed the version of

Aquila, in the second that of Symmachus, in the third the Septuagint, and in the last that of Theodotion.[1] This was the complement of the tetrapla, or the fourfold edition. Soon after was published an edition called the 'Hexapla,' to which were added two columns at the beginning, the first column being the Hebrew text in Hebrew, or rather Chaldee, letters; and the second, the same Hebrew text in Greek letters. To this were added two other Greek versions, containing only parts of the Old Testament Scripture, one found by him at Jericho, and the other by one of his scholars at Nicopolis; and thus the entire work was sometimes called the 'Hexapla' and sometimes the 'Octapla.' Such was this great and laborious product of the indefatigable perseverance of this extraordinary man. The labour employed in the performance precluded the multiplication of copies, and nothing remains of them but fragments, preserved by ancient authors, insufficient for the purposes for which the work was composed, but enough to attest the magnitude of the labour, and the indomitable pains of its great author.

In the year 215 Caracalla came with his sanguinary troops to Alexandria, and to avoid the danger which was about to befal the Christians of that city, Origen withdrew to Cæsarea in Palestine, where, though not yet ordained, he publicly expounded the Scriptures to large audiences. In the eyes of Demetrius, the Bishop of Alexandria, this was a great offence, and he was made to return to his office in that city, bringing with him the Greek version of the Old Testament, found at Jericho, among other

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[1] Aquila, whose birthplace was Sinope, a city of Pontus, was bred a heathen, and was much addicted to magic and judicial astrology. He became a convert to Christianity. But as he still persisted in his magical delusion, after being forbidden and warned, he was excommunicated. He afterwards became a proselyte to the Jews, was circumcised and admitted into the school of a distinguished Rabbi; and becoming a great proficient in the Jewish language, in the 12th year of the Emperor Adrian, A.D. 128, he published a Greek translation of the Old Testament, which the Jews received, and used it in preference to the Septuagint, that version having been often quoted against them by the Christians; and thus the version of Aquila, and never the Septuagint, is referred to in the Talmud. The other Greek versions were those of Theodotion and Symmachus, the former of whom lived in the time of Commodus, and the latter in the reigns of Severus and Caracalla. Theodotion was either of Sinope or Ephesus; Symmachus was a Samaritan, and afterwards became a Christian, by name, of the sect of the Ebionites. They were both of Judaising principles; maintained the obligation of the law of Moses, and held the Saviour to have been a mere man. As far as they could, they made the Holy Scriptures speak in favour of their particular tenets.

Hebrew and Greek books. Being some time after this sent for by Mammæa, the mother of the Emperor Alexander Severus, to discourse with her on the subject of religion, he repaired to her at Antioch, where he gave her the benefit of his instructions. The interval between this visit and his journey into Achaia, in the year 228, was employed in Alexandria in writing his commentaries on all parts of the Holy Scriptures, which appear to have been delivered orally, and taken from his mouth by notaries, and the pens of ready writers, with whom the art of thus embodying extemporary lectures had been brought in those days to great perfection, and was the vehicle by which the homilies of the Fathers and other productions of their pens have been preserved and transmitted to us.

In the year 228 Origen was sent by Demetrius, his bishop, into Achaia, on an errand to refute and to repress certain heresies and errors by which the churches were disturbed in that quarter. His journey was through Palestine, and being now in the forty-third year of his age, he was ordained a presbyter by the bishops of Jerusalem and Cæsarea ; a proceeding which drew upon him the lasting resentment and enmity of Demetrius, who considered it as an affront to his dignity, and an infringement of his authority. In the pursuit of his revenge he procured the presbyter to be condemned in a synod convened in Egypt for the purpose, and we are told by Jerom that a like sentence was passed upon him at Rome.

Having committed the care of his catechetical school to Heracles, he retired to Cæsarea, in Palestine, in the year 231, where he continued to expound the Scriptures with such reputation that persons from all parts resorted to his lectures. In the meantime, by the influence of Demetrius, in a second council of bishops in Egypt he was deprived and excommunicated, an example which was followed by nearly all the bishops of the East and West, Palestine, Arabia, Phœnicia, and Achaia being the only exceptions. Soon after the excommunication of Origen, Demetrius died, and was succeeded in the bishopric of Alexandria by Heracles, to whom Origen had left the care of his school.

About the year 235 a short persecution of the Christians, generally called the sixth, took place under Maximinus, which drew from Origen's pen his treatise concerning Martyrdom, still extant in Greek, and which he dedicated to his friends Ambrosius and Protoctetus (a Presbyter of Cæsarea), who had been thrown into prison, exhorting them to sacrifice property and life to the maintenance of their faith in the Gospel. During the short violence of this persecution he himself remained in the house of Juliana, a lady of rank and wealth.

It was in the year 242, or, as some make it, a year or two later, that Beryllus, Bishop of Bostra, in Arabia, became the propagator of some foolish and dangerous errors, to confute which the assistance of Origen was requested by a council held to consider them ; and to the honour of both the parties, the bishop surrendered his judgment to the arguments and persuasions of Origen, and owned his obligations with great thankfulness. Returning to Cæsarea he pursued his studies, and delivered his instructions with his accustomed earnestness, usually discoursing extempore to delighted audiences ; and such was the fame of his extraordinary argumentative powers, that, although himself the maintainer of several censurable opinions, he was often the resource of the Church when a new heresy started into being to disturb her repose. But for no exertion of his powers was the cause of truth so indebted to him as for his defence of Christianity against the arguments of Celsus, contained in a treatise entitled, 'The true Discourse,' of which nothing remains but what Origen has preserved for the sake of refuting it. In this able work, which is the only fruit of the toil of this great man which has come entire to us, the truth and excellence of Christianity are maintained against the calumnies of the pagans with great correctness and vigour ; and the astonishing course of our Saviour's life and miracles, with all the luminous proofs of His divinity and resurrection, is set forth in terms of the greatest weight and authority.

The epoch of the Decian, or seventh general persecution of the Christians, in the year 249, brings us to the last stage of Origen's extraordinary life—extraordinary by the display of talents which triumphed over all the infirmities of his own body, and all the assaults of malice and persecution, and extraordinary by the frequent lapses into which the heat and philosophical bias of his mind too often betrayed him. At the age of sixty-four, with a frame not, like his mind, of adamant, but weak, weary, and wasted by unpausing exercitation, he was immured in a close prison, loaded with irons, his limbs stretched in the stocks ; and death, in its most terrific form, threatened, but "delayed to strike," only that a time might be given for the previous process of elaborate torture. The life of the Emperor was cut short; and the hand of Providence, thus interposed, prevented a spectacle in which the glory of martyrdom and the ignominy of persecution would have stood before the world in their greatest grandeur and truest deformity. Origen was set free, and after a short interval of five years, he tranquilly expired at the city of Tyre, in the year of our Lord 253, and in the seventieth year of his age, sustaining to the last the title of Adamantius by his constancy and passive valour in his high Christian calling.

The writings of Origen were very numerous, none of which are extant except in fragments and mutilated remains, or in very imperfect Latin translations, save the above-mentioned luminous performance in answer to Celsus, in eight books (which, happily for the Church of Christ, exists in its original Greek) and the treatises on Prayer and Martyrdom. Eusebius tells us of one hundred epistles of Origen which he had collected. Of his 'Tetrapla' and 'Hexapla' little remain; his ten books entitled 'Stromata' are all lost, and the same must be said of his celebrated expositions of Scripture, running the whole length of the inspired volume. Some of the wreck of his various commentaries is found among the authors who have been careful to preserve his memory; but his 'Scholia' are clean gone, and none of his homilies live but in the translations of Jerom and Ruffinus. A letter concerning the history of Susannah, and one to Gregory Thaumaturgus, some few fragments of other letters, and some extracts from his works made by Basil and Gregory Nazianzen, remain to us in Greek; but, to the no small disparagement of truth and justice, there appears to have been much fraudulent dealing with all the works of this great Father, both in the Greek originals and the Latin translations, by the interpolations of persons desirous of bringing reproach upon him, or of using his authority to support their own opinions.[1] His four books, *περὶ ἀρχῶν*, on the elements of human knowledge, are only preserved to us in a Latin translation by Ruffinus; in which work his most objectionable tenets are found, and wherein his apologists say the greatest mischief has been done by interpolations and falsifications of the text.

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[1] [Thus Sulpicius Severus, speaking of Origen, observes:—"Episcopi quædam in libris ipsius insanius scripta memorabant, quæ assertores ejus defendere non ausi; ab hæreticis potius fraudulenter inserta dicebant; et ideo non propter illa quæ in reprehensionem merito vocarentur etiam reliqua esse damnanda, cum legentium fides facile possit habere discrimen, ne falsata sequeretur, et tamen catholice disputata retineret. Non esse autem mirum si in libris neotericis et recens

The defenders of Origen have always been very earnest and zealous in his behalf, and some have gone so far as to say that there were two Origens, whereof one was the eminent person of whose praise and reproach we have been treating, and the other a Platonic philosopher of the heathen school, from which last-mentioned professor the most pernicious doctrines covered with the name of Origen are said to be derived. But the περὶ ἀρχῶν is a sufficiently fruitful source, without surmising any such mistake of the person, to account for the whole progeny of baneful errors of which the name of Origen bears the reproach. In this book there were, doubtless, very many essential and fundamental truths, but there were also the springs of many and dangerous heresies, which spread their noxious influence over the Christian world. Nor do the 'Stromata' of Origen stand much freer from objection of this reproachful character. He there avows principles of interpretation at which the whole Christian community might justly take alarm. With such views of the course to be adopted in scriptural interpretation as are professed by Origen in the following passages, we can hardly be surprised at his perversions of the sacred record to bring it into harmony with a mystic theology—the product of mere human invention, and full of the corrupt suggestions of a scholastic bewilderment. In his 'Stromata' he thus states his notions of the true principles of interpretation: "Multorum malorum occasio est, si quis in carne Scripturæ maneat, quæ qui fecerint, regnum Dei non consequentur. Quamobrem spiritum Scripturæ fructusque quæramus qui non dicuntur manifesti." And in another place, "Non valde eos juvat Scriptura, qui eam intelligunt, ut scriptum est." It is no subject of wonder that Scripture, subjected to such a method of interpretation, should be made to lend its authority to every

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scriptis fraus hæretica fuisset operata, quæ in quibusdam locis non timuisset incidere Evangelicam veritatem." — Sulp. Sev. Dial. 1, § 3.—Ed.]

[Jerom says:—"Origenem propter eruditionem sic interdum legendum arbitror quomodo Tertullianum, Novatum, Arnobium, Apollinarium, et nonnullos ecclesiasticos Scriptores Græcos pariter et Latinos, ut bona eorum diligamus, vitemusque contraria."—Hierom. Epist. 86.—Ed.]

[Cardinal Baronius pronounces one of the works palmed upon him to be spurious, and yet has the effrontery to quote it elsewhere as genuine. The treatise referred to is that entitled 'Homilies upon Job.'—See James's 'Corruptions of Fathers,' p. 13.—Ed.]

fanciful notion and mystical meaning by which its doctrines might be blended with the subtleties of a spurious philosophy. By a licentious use of this method of exposition, Origen outran all competition in allegorising ingenuity. But this intrusion of pagan learning was not only productive of allegorical trifling, but led to a mysticism replete with error and dangerous conceits; and instead of being the means of confuting the Jews and silencing the Gnostics, as was vainly boasted, by defeating them on their own ground, it became a great aggravation of the mischief already current in the Churches of the East by additional mixtures of fable with truth and authority with invention. As man is susceptible of a threefold division, sensitive, moral, and rational, so, in the opinion of Origen, the Scripture might be divided into literal, moral, and mystical senses, of which the literal, like the baser part of man, was the least worthy. They who would see farther into Scripture must search out its moral sense; and the spiritual or mystical sense, which lay farther still removed, was to be the reward of deeper investigation and more sanctified research. In Origen's way of illustration there exists a material and a spiritual world, and again this spiritual world his refining fancy divides into two parts—the earthly mystical and spiritual world, which is the Church upon earth, and the heavenly mystical world above. This mystic sense pervades all Scripture, and the allegorical must always be resorted to when the literal sense would seem unworthy of the agent or subject, or opposed to correct reason.

Peculiar care was to be used in searching for the allegorical sense—a modesty which it would have been well if Origen had observed in all his scriptural expositions and illustrations, but from which he departed so widely as at length to become the too successful propagator of his own illusions.

Origen's imputed errors were such as were to be expected from an imagination so luxuriant labouring to reconcile an earth-born wisdom with that which is from above. Men, angels, and devils, according to him, were originally the participants of a common nature to which appertained ultimately the benefit of Christ's atonement. Good and bad spirits were both alike corporeal,—those of a more ethereal, these of a denser composition, and each in different measures rare or dense, according to their degrees respectively of purity or corruption. In imitation of Plato's philosophy, and affecting a wisdom above Scripture, he held the pre-existence of human souls, and their confinement in material bodies for offences committed in a former state of being. It seemed also to be his opinion that men might by their own free agency so improve themselves in virtue and holiness as to reach the rank and dignity of angels; and on the other hand, that angels might by their transgressions lower their condition to the level of mortal men: to arrive at a saving knowledge of God, might, according to the views of Origen, deducible from his language, be the fruit of mere human endeavours, independently of Divine grace. The historical facts of Scripture were often buried under his abstruse applications. Among his aberrations we find a theory which supposes the spirits of the deceased to remain on earth till prepared for a higher stage of advancement; then to be further instructed in the regions of air by angels, and afterwards to pass by successive steps to the highest heaven; and even when at the highest stage of exaltation, subject still to lapse and forfeiture and another course of trial in other bodies; so that, according to Origen, heaven and hell had both their vicissitudes, and were both liable to be abridged in their duration. In his loose and latitudinarian contemplations, many worlds in succession were the precursors of our own, and many are to come after it in a similar successive order.

All these, and many more of the like fancies, are imputed to Origen—a charge but too well substantiated by the testimony of such of his productions as remain to us. But it must be remembered, in justice to his character, that his works have come down to us in a condition which places them under great disadvantage. We see them in a very mutilated state, and, for the greater part, through the medium of a Latin translation. His advocates even complain that sufficient or fair allowance is not made for his profuse adoption of rhetorical figures; and it has been further alleged on his behalf that some of the errors which appear in his works are exhibited rather as the opinions of others than his own, and intended to be confuted by his pen. The Latin translations of Origen have been suspected of unfaithfulness. Some polemical terms occur in them which are not found in any writings till after the Council of Nice; and such of his productions as are still extant in Greek are thought by many capable judges to have been abused by interpolations, either to cast discredit on the reputation of this great Father, or to propagate errors under the authority of his name. Still, however, after giving all due effect to the excuses which his friends have endeavoured to set up in his defence, the most candid cannot but complain that the writings of Origen have given currency to errors of the worst consequence to the purity of the Scripture standard—at variance with the teaching of the Holy Ghost and the simplicity of that Gospel which puts aside the wisdom of man, that Christ only, and Christ crucified, may be the single anchor of the Christian's hope.

The statement already alluded to, that there were two Origens, one being the illustrious individual of whose character we have been treating, the other a Platonic philosopher, of pagan celebrity, rests on dubious authority.[1] It seems to have been gathered from what Porphyrius says, as quoted by Eusebius,[2] who was an elaborate apologist of Origen, that the heretical sect called Origenists derived their wild and unsanctified theories from the Platonic philosopher. But there is quite enough in the *περὶ ἀρχῶν*, or 'De Principiis,' as it has come down to us in its Latin dress, to furnish the matter of all the absurdities which have been imputed to the Origenists; and our Origen can hardly be acquitted of having given birth to the errors which have been taught under his name, unless we adopt the opinion of some of his apologists above referred to, that the most objectionable matters found in the book last mentioned were not truly his, but inserted into that work through malice and envy, or a desire to invest erroneous opinions with his great authority. In the opinion of Jerom it was from the book *περὶ ἀρχῶν*, or 'De Principiis,' that Pelagius drew his heresy. There were among those who passed under the name of Origenists some that denied the divinity of the Saviour, and held the wildest opinions concerning the souls of men; placed Adam's paradise in heaven; animated the sun and moon and stars; and taught, on the authority of their own imaginations, the final forgiveness and restoration of the fallen angels and spirits under condemnation. These dangerous delusions, for a time confined to the Oriental Churches, were carried to Rome by the translation of Ruffinus; and the Churches of the West as well as of the East were generally infected by them during the fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries. The tenets of Origen were condemned, and the reading of his works prohibited, by the fifth General Council and the second of Constantinople.

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[1] [Valesius, the learned commentator on Eusebius, is clearly of opinion that it was so, and gives two reasons for it, which appear to have considerable force. Longinus speaks of an Origen, a Platonic philosopher, who delivered all his lectures *viva voce*, and wrote nothing but a treatise on Dæmons; whereas the great Origen was πολυγραφώτατος.—Vales. 'Annot. in Eus. H. E.' lib. VI. 19.—Ed.]

[2] Lib. VI. c. 19.

On the whole the influence of Origen was very great. His powerful talents appear to have been chastened and moderated by a disposition and deportment ingenuous and gentle. Sincere without rudeness, ardent without impetuosity, and inflexible without rigour, it seemed to be his honest aim to spread his knowledge, and to exalt the Church in the eyes of the heathen by raising it to the level of the Gentile philosophy, and encircling it with the graces of his classical eloquence. His end and intention were good, but his means were unsafe and unsound. Great part of what he drew from his own exuberant learning operated only to the prejudice of the cause he was labouring to promote. His reputation was extended wherever talents were held in admiration; but the injury wrought by his example was at least as far spread as the lustre of his name, and the effects of his zeal are traceable rather in the blemishes than in the beauties of the sanctuary,—rather in the arbitrary dogmas of a vague tradition than in the saving simplicity of a Scripture-built theology.

He was, after all deductions and allowances, a man of a vast and comprehensive mind, indefatigable research, and profound learning. If he was not the wisest man of the age in which he flourished, it was because he would be wise above what was written, and was seduced by excess of self-reliance to wander out of the way in the wilderness, while the oracles of Jehovah were showing him the path to Zion.

Among those whom the teaching of Origen had prepared for eminence may be mentioned, as the most distinguished, Gregory Thaumaturgus, and his brother, Athenodorus, both afterwards bishops and luminaries of the Church. To these we may add Firmilianus, who became Bishop of Cæsarea in Cappadocia, with whom Origen lived in an intercourse of great friendship and familiarity. Dionysius, afterwards Bishop of Alexandria, may also be reckoned among his scholars who bore testimony by their virtues to the efficacy of his instructions. These instructions, it cannot be denied, were calculated to lay the foundation of many visionary aberrations and abstractions which had neither warrant nor colour in the Scriptures of truth. But still it is only justice to Origen to allow that, even in his book 'De Principiis,' saving truths, and such as lie at the bottom of the believer's hope, are distinctly maintained. Among the most eminent divines who in 264, at the first Council of Antioch, passed sentence upon the doctrines of Paul of Samosata, which denied the divinity of Christ, were those who had derived their knowledge principally from the lectures of Origen at Alexandria or Cæsarea. Gregôry of Neo- (or New) Cæsarea, whose original name was Theodorus, was foremost among that number. His conversion from heathenism, and the change of his study of the law for that of the oracles of heavenly truth, were among the trophies of Origen's teaching, which were diffused throughout all Christendom. Induced by the persuasions of Origen to study the Bible, and soon after baptized by the name of Gregory, he passed the first eight years from his conversion under the tuition of his great Christian preceptor at Cæsarea in Palestine. Although the life of Gregory is interspersed with such wonderful relations as to pass with many for legendary tales, it is not to be forgotten that we have the record of his wonderful career from the pen of Gregory of Nyssa, and that his brother, Basil the Great, in his book on the Holy Spirit, as well as in his epistles, brings to the narrative no small additional weight of testimony. Pontus was the native land of Gregory, and to Pontus he returned from the tuition of Origen, and was made Bishop of New Cæsarea, over which Church he presided about six-and-twenty years; at the end of which period, being sensible of the approach of death, he is said to have sent persons to inquire how many in the city yet remained in the darkness of paganism; and it is added that, being informed that there were only seventeen such persons, he sighed, and raising his eyes to Heaven, lamented that his work was yet incomplete, at the same time declaring his thankfulness that, finding but seventeen Christians at his first coming thither, he left but seventeen idolaters to his successor. He appears to have died in the year after his conspicuous share in the Council of Antioch above-mentioned. Of the stories told of this worker of wonders, strong as is the testimony of the great Basil and his brother of Nyssa, if it would be irreverent to say that they stagger belief, we may be permitted to say that they at least demand that the common tests of credibility should yield to the authority of sainted names. It appears that the duties of the episcopal office were faithfully discharged by him till, under the persecution of Decius, he judged it prudent to abscond. Retreating to a desert mountain, he was searched for in vain by multitudes, who came to the place where he was, and were only baffled in the pursuit by his miraculous disappearance. Many relations concerning this renowned Father—if that title belongs to him—equally out of the ordinary course of nature and humanity, have gained him the appellation of Thaumaturgus, and registered him among the saints of the Church. Of the literary works ascribed to this Gregory, all that can be regarded as genuine, according to Jerom, is his eulogy of Origen, a metaphrase on Ecclesiastes, divers epistles, of which only his canonical epistle is extant, respecting the treatment of the lapsed, and his Creed, or short confession or exposition of faith, whereof the genuineness of the latter part has been questioned. Some works are imputed to him which are plainly spurious. There were some who suspected him of inclining to Sabellianism, or a confusion of the Persons of the Trinity; but against this charge he is elaborately defended by Basil.

Among the other luminaries of the third century, Dionysius of Alexandria and Cyprian of Carthage were the most conspicuous. We will give the prior place to Dionysius, though his life was prolonged a few years after the martyrdom of Cyprian, because he was a native of Alexandria and of the school of Origen. By what means his conversion was produced it does not appear, except by his own epistle to Philemon, a presbyter of Rome, in which he states that, by a diligent perusal of the books that were put into his hands, he was converted to the true faith. He is said to have been born in Alexandria of wealthy pagan parents, but the time of his birth is nowhere mentioned. Being early distinguished by his love of learning, he became an assiduous attendant on the teaching of Origen, and was ordained a presbyter. In the year 232 Heracles, who had succeeded Origen in the presidency of the school of Alexandria, was made the bishop of that city, in the room of Demetrius, and Dionysius took his place in the catechetical office, in which he continued during sixteen years, till, on the death of Heracles, he was appointed to succeed him in the episcopal office. From the time of his promotion to the last hour of his existence it was the lot of this Father to be exercised in troubles and afflictions. In the year 249 a violent commotion was excited in the city of Alexandria, in which the Christian part of the population was exposed to the unrestrained fury of an exasperated pagan mob, who were suffered to riot in the destruction of the Christian inhabitants with whatever cruelties their hatred and malice could invent. The persecution under Decius soon followed these bloody tumults in the city of Alexandria, an account of which is given by Eusebius in the sixth book of his 'Ecclesiastical History,' in copious extracts from the writings of Dionysius. His sufferings under this persecution, which was general throughout the Roman world, continued for about a year and a half, at the end of which time an interval succeeded in which Dionysius and his flock had comparative rest. In 257 a fresh persecution broke out under Valerian, and Dionysius, being brought before the prefect, and called upon to recant, was, upon his refusal, banished to Cephro, a village in the desert of Libya, from whence he was removed to Collathis. From this banishment, during which his sufferings were great, he returned to Alexandria in 260, when Valerian's persecution was terminated by the sad catastrophe of his overthrow by the Persian army under Sapor. On his return, civil war, and all its attendant miseries, raged in the city of Alexandria.

The Christians enjoyed another interval of repose under Gallienus, the successor of the unfortunate Valerian, and Dionysius was permitted to return to his people. But disturbances again broke out, and famine, succeeded by pestilence, afflicted for some years both Rome and her provinces. Dionysius was unhappily thrown upon times in which all the passions of the human mind were in their most extravagant state of excess ; and the many subjects of contention which agitated the Christian world called into exercise this unhappy temper of the times, where temperate argument and soul-saving persuasion were the only legitimate weapons. It was about this time that Sabellianism began to unsettle the foundations of Christian belief by confounding the Trinity of Persons, from whose specific offices the gracious scheme of man's redemption derives its glory and its harmony. Against this dangerous heresy the powers of Dionysius were so vigorously exerted as to incur, by an excessive leaning to the opposite side, the suspicion of Arianism. His zeal in combating Sabellianism urged him to greater vehemence than accorded with his usual manner, and may possibly have carried him to the borders of an enthusiasm to which may be owing in some degree his vision recorded in his letter to Philemon, in which a voice from Heaven confirms his wavering resolution to peruse the works of heretics in order to qualify himself for opposing them with the greater success. "Read," says the voice, "whatever comes to your hands, for you are able to examine and try all things, and this was the first occasion of your embracing the faith."

The age and declining health of Dionysius prevented his attendance at the Synod of Antioch, held in the year 264, in which the heresy of Paul of Samosata was condemned by the suffrages of seventy of the Eastern bishops, and the heretic himself degraded from his episcopal office. The same year was the last of the existence upon earth of this highly virtuous and valuable man, whose great knowledge, moderation, and wisdom, place his memory in a very dignified prominence among the Fathers of the third century.

Contemporary with Dionysius of Alexandria and Gregory of Neocæsarea, both pupils in the school of Origen, and who both departed out of life in the same year, 265, lived the laborious and energetic Thascius Cæcilius Cyprianus, born of heathen parents in the city of Carthage, it is supposed about the year of our Lord 200. His conversion to Christianity is usually placed in the year 245, and ascribed to the influence of Cæcilius, a presbyter of the same city, of which happy change, accomplished so late in life, he himself has left us an account in his tract, 'De Gloria Dei, ad Donatum.' He had been a public professor of rhetoric, and lived with much splendour and expense until his happy conversion to the Gospel of Christ. After a few months from this great change he was ordained a presbyter, and was raised in the year 248 to the dignity of Bishop of Carthage, the duties of which office he faithfully discharged for the space of ten years, and then sealed his ministry by a courageous martyrdom. His Christian life was a short career of tumultuous glory; cast upon times of bitter persecution without, and discord and distraction within, the Church. After being educated and exercised in all the vanities and pollutions of fraud and fable, and flattered by an acknowledged superiority in the popular arts of rhetoric and oratory, he stood forth on a sudden the champion of a cause wherein all his learning was to be reversed, the pomps of the world to be exchanged for the contrite spirit, and self-confidence to give place to a penitent trust in pardoning grace through a crucified Saviour.

In the year 250 he was driven into exile by the persecution under the Emperor Decius, having passed near a year in concealment, during which thirty epistles were written by him, addressed to his Church, and various individuals, which are extant. They are replete with pious counsels and wise admonitions; nor have the first three centuries anything to show in practical divinity more worthy of respect and adoption. At this time the care of the lapsed, or those who had renounced the truth from a dread of persecution, gave great trouble to the Church.

By some of the presbyters these delinquents had been too easily received again into the Church, of which Cyprian sorely complained in many of his letters; while by others the exclusion of these lapsed members was sought to be made perpetual; for which latter mode of dealing with them two presbyters,[1] the one of Rome and the other of Carthage, were the determined advocates. Cyprian held a middle course between these extremes; and to quiet the Church, thus shaken by these conflicting tendencies, his efforts were earnestly directed. His letters on this subject were the dictates of a mind tenacious of discipline, but sensible of the duty of discipline itself to listen to the plaint of godly sorrow, and to open wide the doors of the sanctuary to the returning penitent, though it is thought by many that in this controversy he indulged himself in a blamable use of acrimonious expression.

At the commencement of the reign of Valerian, the Church of Christ having a brief interval of peace from without, the spirit of contention became impatient, as usual, within. Controversies concerning baptism irritated and divided the Christian world, and engaged the mind and pen of Cyprian in much harassing disputation. In a synod at Carthage of sixty bishops, judgment was given against deferring the baptizing of infants to the eighth day, in opposition to Fidus, an African bishop. The mind of Cyprian was also much occupied with the question whether it was necessary that persons who had been baptized by heretics should be re-baptized, and for settling this point a synod was summoned, wherein it was determined that no baptism out of the Church could be valid, and that it was necessary to re-baptize those who had received baptism from a heretic; and this determination was confirmed by a Council, the sixth of Carthage, attended by seventy-two bishops, and again at a subsequent Council of the same city, the seventh, where, in conformity with Cyprian's judgment, clinical baptism, or that of sick persons in their beds, though the same were done by aspersion instead of dipping, was decreed to be available, where a necessity for such allowance really existed.

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[1] Both these presbyters bore the name of Novatus, though it is probable that the Roman was always called Novatian by Cyprian, to distinguish him from Novatus, his own presbyter, whom he considered as the principal promoter of the disturbances at Rome.—See Lardner, on 'The Credibility of Gospel History,' xlvii.

In the fourth year of Valerian's reign the condition of the Christians suffered a calamitous change. It seems he was inflamed against them by an Egyptian magician, who persuaded him that they were bringing misfortunes upon the Empire by the potency of their charms and incantations. They now again became the objects of furious edicts, which let loose against them the rage of the populace in all the provinces of the Empire. This is usually called the eighth general persecution, and took place in the year 257. Astasius Paternus was now the proconsul in Carthage, before whom Cyprian was summoned to appear, and being told that, by the command of the Emperor, he must sacrifice to the gods according to the Roman rites, he refused to acknowledge any but the true God, the Creator of heaven and earth, to whom Christians prayed for themselves and all men, and especially for the prosperity of the Emperor. He was banished to Curubis, a little town situate on a promontory of the Libyan sea, from which place many of his letters were written, and especially to the prisoners awaiting their martyrdom. His exile in this place lasted but till the following year, A.D. 258, a year noted for the beheading of Sixtus, Bishop of Rome, and his archdeacon Laurence;[1] the cruel execution of which last-mentioned martyr, and his extraordinary patience under it, is among the most remarkable of the recorded instances of superhuman endurance, by which flesh has been lifted above its infirmity by the succours of an unseen hand.

Cyprian returned to his house at Carthage towards the end of the year 258, regardless of the doom that awaited him. He was soon apprehended, and being brought before the proconsul, Maximus, and again required to sacrifice to the gods, he again refused, as resolutely as on the former occasion, and was ordered to be forthwith beheaded. He was led to a field in the suburbs of the city, and there, after covering his eyes with his own hands, sealed his faith with his blood, and obtained the martyr's crown. Thus perished one of the purest and brightest models of Christian integrity and valour, a pupil of grace of very short standing, having reached the middle of life before his conversion, and, till then, a child of vanity, and the world's favourite. His episcopal office was only of ten years' duration; but it was a period full of the works of beneficence and piety, and diffusing throughout Christendom, in its day of severe trial, the chastening and refreshing influence of prudent counsel and pure example. His Christian course began with the abdication of his hereditary and acquired substance, which appears to have been equal to a high condition in society. All this he turned into the channels of benevolence and charity, reserving only such a pittance for himself as was claimed by his necessities.

It does not appear that Cyprian had penetrated very far either in the study of philosophy, as taught in the pagan schools, or of the learning involved in the deeper topics of theological research; but in the power of persuasion, and a wise, natural, and legitimate use of the arguments falling in his way, he will bear a comparison with the greatest men of Christian antiquity. He seems to have been a better orator than a scholar, and a practical divine, rather than the handler of abstruse questions. Cyprian and Lactantius have been called the founders of ecclesiastical Latinity—an ambiguous praise at best; but, in vivacity and vigour of expression, the former surely holds a distinguished place among ecclesiastical classics. In perspicuity and purity of diction he rises not greatly above Tertullian, who was the object of his veneration. His memory has been held in great honour by many of the Fathers, and Gregory Nazianzen has embalmed it in a professed eulogy. Pontius, one of his deacons, who attended him at his death, has given an account of his martyrdom in a work entitled 'Passio S. Cypriani;' but his history is best to be collected from his own epistles, which are eighty-one in number, and his various treatises, which amount to fourteen.[1] Lactantius is high in his praise, but applies it principally to his flowing diction and rhetorical skill employed in the promotion of virtue and godliness. Sextus Senensis says of him, "Quod multa piissima opuscula elegantissimæ phraseos, et Ciceroniano candori proxima ad ædificationem ecclesiæ scripsit." Jerom says, "Quod instar fontis purissimi, levis incessit et placidus," and Erasmus, that in Cyprian we venerate the apostolical spirit; to which we will add the elegant commendation bestowed by St. Augustin in his second book against the Donatists: "Non me terret auctoritas Cypriani, quia reficit humilitas Cypriani."

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[1] [It is a story too well known, perhaps, for mention that, when Laurence was required to produce before the Roman persecutor the riches of the Church, he exhibited as such the lame, the halt, the blind who lived upon the Church's alms. The annals of his martyrdom are given us in verse by the Christian poet Prudentius."—Ed.]

We must not omit Cyril of Jerusalem in a survey of Church history unfolding itself in the lives, ministrations, creeds, and confessions of those who claim our veneration under the title of Fathers. He is entitled to our respect as a faithful and useful expounder of doctrine, however disposed we may be to question the credibility of some of his relations. He is said to have been born at Jerusalem about the year 315, and made a deacon and afterwards a presbyter of the Church, by Maximus, who was then the bishop of the same city. Maximus died in 349 or the year after; and Cyril was elevated to the see of Jerusalem by Acacius, then the Bishop of Cæsarea, whose doubtful position between Arianism and orthodoxy made Cyril himself for a time suspected of a similar vacillation. But whatever was the suspicion attached to this connection, it was soon dissipated by the quarrel which took place between Cyril and his patron respecting the priority of their respective sees, and the orthodoxy of Cyril became well established among his contemporaries, there being nothing but his moderation, and his avoidance of extremes, to cast a shade of doubt upon the soundness of his faith. His contest with Acacius caused him to be twice deposed from his bishopric; but after short suspensions he was peaceably seated from the death of the Emperor Valens, in the year 378, till his own death in 386. We have the less reason to doubt the integrity of his faith, as his ordination was confirmed in the Council of Constantinople in 380.

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[1] See the Oxford edit. by Bishop Fell, 1682, where they are chronologically arranged; with Pearson's 'Annales Cyprianici,' and H. Dodwell's 'Dissertationes Cyprianicæ.'

Of the writings of this Father, eighteen catechetical discourses for the instruction of catechumens, and five, called mystagogics, for those newly baptized, have come down to us. It is due to his memory to advert with gratitude to the value of these catecheses, which may be considered as forming one of the most clear abridgments, and probably the most ancient, of Christian doctrines. He has also left to us a celebrated letter, addressed to the Emperor Constantius, containing a marvellous description of a supernatural light observed over Mount Golgotha, at the commencement of his episcopate, and called "the apparition of the cross," which was the form it was said to have assumed. It is stated to have been visible for several hours to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. The expression of a wish with which the letter concludes, that Constantius might be induced thereby to glorify the consubstantial Trinity, will tend perhaps to invalidate the evidence of the miracle in the minds of many not disposed to incredulity, since it shows that Cyril, a zealous Trinitarian controversialist, sought thereby to influence the creed of the Emperor, who strongly favoured the Arian tenets; and it must be confessed to have been but too common a maxim among the great ecclesiastics of those times, that a pious and orthodox end justified a recourse to fraudulent means.

Except a short period of suffering towards the end of the reign of the Emperor Aurelian (274) the Christians enjoyed a freedom from persecution from the death of Valerian in 260 to the year 303, which was the nineteenth year of the reign of Diocletian. During that interval the chief luminaries of the Christian Church were Eusebius and Lactantius, of whom the first-mentioned may be called the Church's librarian. The numerous links supplied by him to the chain of its history entitle him to be recorded with great gratitude. He has preserved in their living lustre the renown of heroes who have sealed with their deaths the testimony of our redemption, and who still in their speaking examples hold communion with the faithful.

Eusebius was born at Cæsarea in Palestine, about the year of our Lord 270, and at Cæsarea, of which city he became the bishop, he appears to have spent the greater part of his most useful existence. The friendship subsisting between Eusebius and Pamphilus the martyr has handed down their memories with a double and reflected glory. It was signalised on the part of Eusebius by the addition of Pamphili to his name (Eusebius amicus Pamphili). By whom, or at what period of his life, Eusebius was made a convert to the faith, does not appear. It is certain that his early years were employed in the earnest pursuit of literature and philosophy, under the best instructors. He and his friend were constituted at the same time presbyters of Cæsarea, and Jerom observes of them that they seemed to be animated by one soul. The great persecution under Diocletian began in the year 303, and is commonly distinguished as the tenth. It raged with unrelenting fury for ten years in all parts of the empire, and very sorely in Palestine, where Eusebius was the sorrowing witness of the many martyrdoms of which he was the historian. The narratives of human suffering by torture in its most terrific and disgusting forms are necessarily monotonous, and perhaps little instructive in their examples; but the circumstances by which the case of Apphianus was distinguished were very affecting and peculiar. He was a native of Lycia and a scholar of Eusebius; and being told that one of the persons about to suffer for his Christian contumacy was on the point of giving way to the dread of torment, pressed through the crowd, and catching hold of his hand ready to offer the sacrifice, forced him to let it fall. The penalty of this courageous act was the torture and execution of the hero himself, whose mangled body was afterwards thrown into the sea.

The patience of the martyrs under their sufferings is said to have won Arnobius to the Christian cause, by inciting him to meditation upon a system of doctrines which produced convictions and assurances stronger than death and triumphant over torture. He had long been the zealous advocate of heathenism, and as a convert to the truth his ardour was no less conspicuous. In seven books against the pagan superstitions he maintained the great superiority of the Christian faith, but with no small intermixture of the absurdities which belonged to his former profession, and still tainted and bewildered his thoughts. He was a professor of rhetoric at Sicca, a bishopric in Africa, and had for his scholar the renowned Lactantius, who, travelling in the same luminous track with Eusebius, helped forward the advance of the bright æra in which the Roman world was to make its eagles do reverence to the banner of the Cross.

When the persecution under Diocletian had continued for about four years, Maximin came to Cæsarea, and solemnised his birthday by the execution, first, of Agapius, the bishop of that city, who, after being nearly destroyed by a beast in the amphitheatre, was thrown into the sea. The martyrdom of Pamphilus was a spectacle of magnanimity and horror. Being brought before the governor, Urbanus, the effect of menace and solicitation was in vain tried upon his constant mind. Resolutely refusing all compromise with heathen rites, his body was made to endure every refinement of ingenious cruelty. His death was suspended by the sudden removal of Urbanus from his office, and it was the doom of this learned and holy man to linger in his painful and exhausted state in a prison till, at the end of two years, the sentence of condemnation was executed upon him. If Pamphilus holds a less distinguished place in ecclesiastical history than his friend Eusebius, it must be charged upon time, which has laid its invidious hand upon all the productions of his pen save one, being the first of five books of a history and vindication of Origen, which exists only in a Latin translation by Ruffinus.[1] He was a native of Berytus, and a Presbyter of Cæsarea in Palestine, where, having instituted a school of divinity, he amassed a noble library, many of the books being written by his own hand, which was long the great resort and resource of the theological student,[1] and to which Eusebius, Lactantius, and Jerom were largely indebted. Eusebius wrote a life of him in three books, of which nothing remains. His martyrdom took place in 309.

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[1] [The five books of this Apology are said to have been written by him when in prison, assisted by his friend, Eusebius. A sixth, which was added after his martyrdom, is thought to have been the composition of Eusebius alone.—Ed.]

Immediately after the death of his magnanimous friend, Eusebius retired from Cæsarea into Egypt, where the persecution of the Christians was still in its sanguinary vigour. Here he witnessed those daily scenes of suffering and fortitude which his pen has described; such numbers being executed that the swords of the pagans were blunted, and the tormentors tired with their incessant work. The arm of persecution was not slow in reaching Eusebius. He was seized and thrown into prison, and as he was afterwards at large without its appearing by what means, the suspicion of his having purchased his release by the disgrace of sacrificing before his heathen judges has in some degree qualified the admiration with which the character of Eusebius is regarded.[2]

The triumph of Constantine the Great, and his final establishment on the throne of the empire, was completed about the year of our Lord 313, when the sufferings of the Christians from imperial persecutions were terminated. The city of Cæsarea, being the seat of the Proconsul after the destruction of Jerusalem, became the metropolis of the province, and Eusebius, being advanced to this see, was made a conspicuous sharer in the prosperity of the Christian brotherhood. At the dedication of the beautiful church erected at Tyre by the contributions of Paulinus and others, which was among the early fruits of this happy revolution, Eusebius, amidst a large concourse of divines and Christian people, pronounced the oration[3] which he has given us in his history, wherein the gracious providence of God in converting their sorrows into joy and triumph is acknowledged in terms befitting so great an occasion.

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[1] The volumes contained in this library are said to have amounted to thirty thousand, and this collection is considered as the first circulating library of which there is any record, as they are said to have been lent out to persons religiously disposed. The fact reflects great honour upon the character of Pamphilus, and makes us regret the oblivion which hides from us the traces of so illustrious an example.

[2] [Eusebius was accused of this by the bishops and confessors of Egypt in the Synod of Tyre. Baronius states it as a fact: but it is strenuously denied by Valesius, who argues that he would never, if labouring under such a charge, have been afterwards appointed to the see of Cæsarea.—Ed.]

[3] [In this oration Eusebius compliments the Bishop of Tyre in terms of extravagant and profane flattery, equivalent to those which are applied by the Church of Rome to its Pontiffs. He ranks him next to Christ, and styles him a new Aaron or Melchizedec, made like unto the Son of God (*ἀφωμοιωμένον τῷ*

The mists of doubt which invested the character of Eusebius concerning his imputed bias towards Arianism seem to have been only partially dispelled even by his own disclaimers. If Arius persuaded Eusebius to look with favour upon his opinions, it was probably by means of some misrepresentation or suppression. He was induced to write to Alexander, Bishop of Alexandria, to remit the sentence which had put the heretic out of communion with the Church, and to receive him again into its fold. But his friendly efforts had only the effect of bringing himself under suspicion, especially with him to whom he had made the application. A portion of this letter to the Bishop of Alexandria is still extant in the acts of the Nicene Council, in which Arius is represented as affirming that God from eternity had begotten His only Son, by whom He made the worlds and all things therein.

The Grand Council, in which the principles of Arius, so menacing to the orthodoxy and harmony of the Christian communion, were to be reviewed and adjudged by the assembled ecclesiastical authorities of the empire, was summoned by Constantine to meet at Nice, in Bithynia, in the year of our Lord 325, at which three hundred and eighteen bishops were present. Eusebius was seated near the Emperor, and addressed to him an inaugural oration. His part in the transactions of the Council was very important. But the confession of faith which was propounded by him was considered as defective in the main article, and was completed by the addition of the words *ὁμοούσιον τῳ πατρὶ*, of the same substance with the Father. The Creed, as settled in this great Council of bishops, ran as follows:—"We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, the Maker of all things visible and invisible; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten of the Father, only begotten; that is, of the Sub-

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Υἱῷ τοῦ Θεοῦ). He seems to ascribe to him the power of inspecting the penetralia of his people's hearts. "As the Son does that which He sees the Father do, so, according to Eusebius, Paulinus, looking to his Master with the eyes of the understanding purified, does what he sees Christ doing, using it as his model, endeavouring, as far as lies in his power, to express the image of it; bearing in his soul an image of Christ, the Word, the Wisdom, the Light."—Bishop Kaye's 'Early Church.' He speaks in as fulsome terms of Constantine.—Ibid. p. 130.—Ed.]

stance of the Father; God of God; Light of Light; very God of very God; Begotten, not made; of the same substance with the Father; by whom all things were made that are in heaven and that are in earth; who for us men, and for our salvation, descended, and was incarnate, and became man; suffered and rose again the third day, ascended into the heavens, and will come to judge the living and the dead: and in the Holy Spirit. But those who say that there was a time when He was not, and that He was not before He was begotten, and that He was made out of nothing, or affirm that He is of any other substance or essence, or that the Son of God is created, and mutable or changeable, the Catholic Church doth pronounce accursed."

So far was the Creed settled at this famous Council, giving a wound to the Arian heresy which, if not immediately or speedily fatal, has, in the main, been successful in working its overthrow. But though the Creed above copied was the Creed agreed upon at the Council of Nice, yet it is well known that what usually passes under the name of the Nicene Creed, and is used in the Roman, Lutheran, and English Churches, is that which was set forth by the Council of Constantinople held in the year 381. In this latter Council the Nicene Confession was confirmed, with an additional article concerning the Holy Ghost; it having been especially convened to confute and censure the heresy of Macedonius and his followers, who, while they admitted that the Son was consubstantial with the Father, refused to acknowledge the equal deity of the Holy Ghost. The sentence of the Council was unanimous; and the co-eternity and co-equality of the Three Persons in the ever-blessed Trinity has, in conformity therewith, become the Catholic doctrine of the Christian world.

In this Council of Constantinople Gregory Nazianzen presided, and Gregory Nyssen is said to have drawn up the Explanatory Creed, by which the proper supplement was made to the terms of the great document promulgated at Nice. The addition was in the following words:—"We believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of Life, who proceeds from the Father; who, together with the Father and the Son, is worshipped and glorified; and who spake by the Prophets. We believe one Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church; we acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins; and look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen."

The procession of the Holy Ghost from the Son as well as the Father has since been added, but at what time seems not to be clearly ascertained. The general opinion assigns its adoption into the Creed to the Pontificate of Nicholas I., towards the end of the ninth century.

Speedily after the holding of this memorable Council, the Emperor Constantine set forward vigorously in his Christian course. In various parts of the empire churches were ordered to be built and repaired, and bishops were universally authorised and encouraged to carry on these and other provisions for extending the knowledge of evangelical truth. Eusebius was now the Metropolitan of Palestine, and in this capacity he appears to have received a letter from Constantia, a sister of the Emperor, requesting him to send her the image or picture of the Saviour, to which the bishop's written answer well deserves to be recorded. He desires to be informed what kind of image is intended; whether it was that real and substantial form, or that which He assumed for our sakes in taking upon Him the form of a servant? "I cannot suppose," he adds, "that you intend the former, having been taught by Himself that no man knows the Father but the Son; nor does any man know the Son but the Father who begat Him. You must doubtless, therefore, desire the image of the human nature. But even this we know to have been taken into partnership with the glory of the Deity, and that what was mortal is swallowed up of life. What painter, then, could be able, with a few lifeless colours and strokes, to set forth the lustre of so much majesty, seeing that the disciples themselves could not behold Him when transfigured on the Mount, much less could He be duly represented, since His victory over death, His ascension into heaven, and session upon the throne of majesty at His Father's right hand?" How little acceptable this answer proved to the worshippers of images appears by the censure passed upon it by the second Council of Nice, and the little liking which has been always shown to it by the Romish Church.

In the year of our Lord 330 the city of Byzantium was solemnly dedicated under its new name and designation of Constantinople, to which the seat of empire was removed. It was adorned with many churches, and copies of the Bible to the number of fifty were furnished by Eusebius at the desire of the

Emperor. But notwithstanding the orthodoxy of the throne, and the authoritative voice of the Council of Nice, the Arians continued to spread their doctrines, and to disturb the internal quiet of the Church and the empire. In these contests Eusebius was variously engaged; nor did he always escape the imputation of tenets a little too lax on the subject of this great controversy. At a synod held at Tyre, and to which Athanasius, being then in no favour with the Emperor, was summoned to repel the charges of his adversaries, Eusebius, who presided, was reminded of his release from prison, with an intimation, not to be misunderstood, of his having purchased his liberation by a compliance with the terms of his idolatrous judges.

Constantine the Great expired in his palace at Nicomedia on the 22nd of May, in the year of our Lord 337, aged about sixty-five, having reigned thirty years and ten months. His body was removed by his successor, Constantius, the second of his three sons, to Constantinople, where it was with great pomp[1] interred in the church built by himself and dedicated to the Apostles.

The life of the great prince is eloquently blazoned by Eusebius in the book devoted to that object at the end of his ecclesiastical history; and shortly after this tribute to the cherished memory of his sovereign, his own departure took place. He finished his memorable career about the year 340.

He was a very learned and able man, and deservedly invested with great privileges and distinctions during his long and laborious life. His faith, however, was somewhat ambiguous in one of the main points of Christian orthodoxy. In his own day, and by the learned of a later period, he has been accused of a strong bias towards Arianism. Some, indeed, have numbered him decidedly among the Arians. This was an excessive charge. It would be too severe a censure to call him a follower of Arius, though to some extent he may be said to have shared in his errors. If he contemplated a disparity and subordination in the persons of the Holy Trinity, he maintained, in terms at least, the consubstantiality of the Son with the Father, and yet *ὁμοιούσιον* seems to have come nearer than *ὁμοούσιον* to the spirit of his opinions. The Creed of the Council of Nice is recited in his letter to the people of Cæsarea, in which he explains the ὁμοούσιον to signify that the Son of God in nothing resembled the creatures, but was in all things like to the Father who begat Him, being of the same essence and no other.[1] That he entertained a partiality for Arius will hardly be denied. A fragment of his epistle to Alexander, Bishop of Alexandria, is still extant in the acts of the Nicene Council, in which he asserts that Arius had been wronged by the supposition that he had affirmed the Son to have been made out of nothing; whereas it had appeared, by letters written by himself, that his faith really was that the God of the Old and New Testaments had "from eternal ages begotten His only Son, by whom He made the worlds and all things therein." The truth seems to have been that Arius held that there was a time when the Son was not, and that Eusebius contemplated a co-essential Godhead without personal equality. Among the transactions of that momentous period, it is recorded that, while the draft of the Nicene Creed was being prepared by Eusebius, the term ὁμοούσιον and the anathemas were supplied by the Council, not without some misgivings on his part.[2]

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[1] [We may add, with much superstition, for prayers were offered up on the occasion for the repose of his soul—"*τὰς εὐχὰς ὑπὲρ τῆς βασιλέως ψυχῆς ἀπεδίδοσαν τῷ Θεῷ.*"—Ed.]

Of the numerous productions of Eusebius' pen many are lost; but enough has been preserved to attest the great amount of knowledge, industry, and zeal brought by him to the cause of Christian truth. His 'Chronicon' was a work in two parts, in the first of which were briefly recorded the origin and vicissitudes of nations, and in the second an epitome of the same chronologically arranged; of the original Greek little remains, but Jerom has supplied a Latin translation of the second, which, with considerable additions, was published by Joseph Scaliger, in 1606. His 'Præparatio Evangelica' was extended through fifteen books, and was designed to prepare the pagans to embrace Christianity. His 'Demonstratio Evangelica,' in twenty books, ten of which are lost, was written to convince the Jews, by arguments especially drawn from the Old Testament. His work, 'Contra Hieroclem,' is a defence of Christianity against the attacks of pagan philosophy.

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[1] See Jos. Le Clerc, 'Epist. Eccl.' annexed to his 'Ars Critica,' Ep. ii. p. 30. Natal. Alex. 'Hist. Eccl. Nov. Test.' sec. iv. diss. xvii.

[2] See Cave, Diss. de Eusebii 'Cæsarien Arianismo,' and 'Epist. Apolog.' ad eundem. [Eusebius appears to have been thoroughly an Arian to the extent of denying the Godhead of the Holy Ghost, and asserting that Divine Person to have been the creation of the Son. He quotes in proof of it the text, "Without Him (the Son) nothing was made;" and leaves out the words following, "which was made."—See Pearson on 'Creed,' p. 508 (Dobson).—Ed.]

But the most important and valuable production of the indefatigable industry of Eusebius is his 'Ecclesiastical History,' contained in ten books, which presents an impartial narrative from the birth of the Saviour to the death of Licinius. He has given us a book on the martyrs of Palestine, usually annexed to the eighth book of his 'Ecclesiastical History,' in which we have also an account of those who suffered in Egypt and Asia under the persecution of Diocletian. His praises of Constantine are contained in a work importing to be a life, and in an oration delivered at the Emperor's Vicennalia, in 335. In the following year, 336, Eusebius put forth his two books against Marcellus, in compliance with an order of the Council of Constantinople, which condemned Marcellus as a Sabellian. This was followed by a further confutation of the same Marcellus in a work on Ecclesiastical Theology. A Hebrew topography and an exposition of the Canticles, the lives of the Prophets, and a tabular statement shewing what portions of the Gospel history have been related by one, two, three, or four of the Evangelists, are all ascribed to the pen of Eusebius; of which the first and third have been transmitted to us in a Latin translation by Jerom. Commentaries on the Psalms, and on the book of the Prophet Isaiah, are also reckoned among the labours of Eusebius; but of the work on the Psalms nothing on any beyond the CIXth has come down to us.[1] The works above enumerated sufficiently attest the devotion of Eusebius to the great cause in which he was enlisted, as well as the extent of his learning, and his vigour of perseverance. Numerous other fruits of his zeal and ability, the titles of which only have reached our own times, have given him a name among the most distinguished Fathers of the early Church.

Great talents are not always serviceable to the cause to which they are dedicated: their real advantage lies in their direction. Christian theology was greatly elucidated and promoted by the learned contributions and expositions of Eusebius of Cæsarea; but the eloquence and erudition of Lactantius were instruments of little avail to the cause in which they were employed. He was upon the stage at the same time with Eusebius, and acted an equally conspicuous though less momentous part through the dark and persecuting reign of Diocletian, and the bright ascendant of the great Constantine. His birth and parentage are not recorded with certainty; but, from his names of Lucius Cæcilius Lactantius Firmianus or Firmilianus, it has been conjectured that he was a native of Italy, and perhaps born at Firmum; but as he was a scholar of Arnobius, who gave instructions in rhetoric at Sicca, in Africa, Sicca may with better reason be supposed to have been the place of his nativity. While Diocletian was residing at Nicomedia, Lactantius was sent for to teach rhetoric in that city, where he opened a school, without any remarkable success. He appears to have been brought up in Christian principles, and such was Dr. Lardner's opinion, though others have thought there were reasons for supposing him to have been converted from heathenism to the Christian faith. Some have doubted whether he was a Christian, at least in open profession, while he taught rhetoric at Nicomedia, presuming that, as a Christian teacher, so distinguished a person must have been imminently exposed to the effects of the persecution, at a time when the Church of the Christians in that city was destroyed by pagan violence.

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[1] 'Collect. Nov. Gr. Patr.' Paris. 1706.

As the elegance of Lactantius' Latin style was probably inadequately appreciated by the Greek population of Nicomedia, his scholars were few; and his condition was such as to compel him to seek the supply of his wants from the labours of his pen. But, notwithstanding these resources, Lactantius is recorded to have been, during the greater part of his life, in indigent circumstances; and it is generally supposed, that the only period of his existence unclouded by poverty was that in which he was employed in the family of Constantine as the tutor of his son, the unfortunate Crispus. The subsequent events of the life of this highly qualified person are unascertained by any record that has reached our time. There is ground for supposing that he was left, at the death of his unfortunate pupil, without any provision, and that he passed the remainder of his existence in poverty. The time of his death is quite uncertain. It was probably about the year 330.

Among his accomplishments as a writer the style of Lactantius is principally to be commended; and, when the age in which he flourished is taken into consideration, it is impossible not to hold the brilliancy and solidity of his powers in great admiration. He is at once vehement, varied, and correct, his matter grave, his composition chaste; and, in general, throughout his writings there is a strong savour of honest conviction and sincerity of purpose; but as a theologian he is considered by competent judges to have been very deficient.

His principal performance is his 'Institutions,' an exposition and defence of the Christian faith against its heathen adversaries, in seven books, written, as is supposed, during the persecution under Diocletian, though probably withheld from publication till the commencement of a more auspicious period. To this the author afterwards added an abridgment of the same work. His treatise 'De Ira Dei,' is commended by Jerom as elegant, learned, and complete. Others, less partial and more sound in their criticism, deem this work entitled to very qualified praise. His treatise, 'De Opificio Dei,' is illustrative of the Providence and wisdom of God as displayed in the works of His creation, and principally in the physical and moral structure and properties of man. A work, 'De Mortibus Persecutorum,' is usually attributed to Lactantius, but not with universal consent of the learned. Dr. Lardner inclines to the opinion which denies its genuineness. His 'Symposium' was the production of his youthful days, if truly his. It seems to have been long unknown, and to owe its publication to a discovery of modern date. The various quotations made by Lactantius from the different parts of the sacred Scriptures afford the confirmation of his testimony to their canonical authority. The Book of the Revelation especially has the weight of his conviction in favour of its genuineness as the writing of the Apostle St. John. His epistles, which appear to have been numerous, are lost.[1] That his opinions were very erroneous on the principles and doctrines of saving truth may be gathered from a cursory acquaintance with his writings. He contemplated the Christian scheme as comprising the purest lessons for our guidance in the way of holiness, and for securing to us the blessing of acceptance with God. His eloquence was beneficially bestowed in enforcing our imitation of our Lord's example, and a faithful adherence to the precepts of the Gospel; but the mysterious method of reconciling a sinful and wicked world to its Creator by the atoning blood of a crucified Saviour did not seem to enter, with its fundamental importance, into the faith of Lactantius. Repentance and good works seemed to him sufficient to avert the Divine displeasure; nor was any other procuring cause of salvation the source and centre of his trust and hope. He approved himself as the distinguished assertor of the liberty of private judgment, and insisted, with the courageous confidence of sincere conviction, on the rights of conscience, the unalienable privilege of personal inquiry after truth, and the cruel absurdity of religious persecution. The terrestrial reign of Christ for a thousand years before the general judgment was one of his favourite opinions, for whose advent he was looking with the anxiety of one who contemplated its near approach. In the great article of the Trinity his doctrine was very defective, as well concerning the distinction and relation of the Three Persons as concerning their essential union. If his works will be read with delight and improvement by those who discriminate and enjoy the graces of composition, and with whom learning and philosophy find their due acceptance and praise, such as covet most an acquaintance with things spiritually discerned will find little advantage in consulting Lactantius.

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[1] See Jerom 'De Viris Illust.' 180.

It was among the many distinctions which gave celebrity to the city of Alexandria, in Egypt, that it was the birthplace of *Athanasius*, and the great scene of his actions and vicissitudes. He may be said to have occupied the most conspicuous place among those eminent men of the fourth century brought before us under the designation of the Nicene Fathers. He was born about the year 298, and in 319 was ordained a deacon by Alexander, bishop of Alexandria, with whom he lived in great intimacy till the death of that prelate, which took place about the year after the famous Council of Nice made way for his succession to the vacant see, at the early age of 28. About this time the episcopal dignity had passed through a quick succession at Alexandria. Peter, who had succeeded Theonas in that bishopric about the year 300, was soon after thrown into prison under the Diocletian persecution, together with many eminent persons, among whom was Meletius, Bishop of Lycopolis, in Thebais. A sharp contention took place between Peter and Meletius in prison. Those who, yielding to the stress of persecution and the love of life, had surrendered their faith to the imperial mandates, and sacrificed to the gods, often sued as penitent supplicants to be readmitted into the Christian communion. To such Meletius would by no means open the door of recovery and charity, while Peter was for a milder treatment, and considered that, upon their earnest repentance, their apostasy might be healed, and themselves be reinstated in Christian fellowship. The breach grew wider and wider, and the followers on either side increased in number and hostility. History obscurely intimates that in the end Meletius obtained his release from confinement by complying with the heathen rites, for which he was deposed by Peter and the African bishops, while Peter suffered as a martyr for his indomitable adherence to the faith.

Arius, though made a deacon by Peter, was of the number of those who took part with the schism of Meletius, and from being a follower soon became a leader. Being expelled from the Church of Alexandria by his bishop, he remained in that state of excommunication till the martyrdom of Peter, when Achillas, succeeding to the see, was prevailed upon by his profession of repentance to restore the excommunicant, and even to make him a presbyter of the Church of Alexandria.

The death of Achillas, which happened soon after his promotion, made way for Alexander, to the great disappointment of Arius, who presumed to think himself improperly superseded, and to whose discontent, occasioned by the loss of this preferment, some have imputed the innovations by which he was the author of so much disquietude to the Church. Alexander, in his strenuous maintenance of the perfect unity of the Divine substance, had seemed to lean too much to the error of Sabellius, to which Arius opposed the opposite extreme, arguing that if the Father begot the Son, His subsistence had a beginning—that, by consequence, there was a time when He was not ; and the controversy, being thus generated, soon travelled from east to west, and cast its dark shadow over the whole of Christendom. To have a right conception of the heresy of Arius, we must understand him, from his own words in what remains of his writings, to have affirmed that God the Father was before the Son, not only in the order of nature, but of time—that the Son, though begotten of the Father before all worlds, was not of the same essence or substance with the Father, but differed from Him in nature and power, though formed in His express image and perfect likeness.

These were the dogmas maintained by Arius, and these he not only preached in the Church whereof he was a presbyter, but spread and promulgated in all meetings and conferences, public and private, and in all his epistles and discourses; till at length, by a decree of a synod of all the bishops under the jurisdiction of Alexander, his heresy was condemned, and his expulsion from the Church decreed. This proceeding put no stop to his vindication and diffusion of his opinions, and so successful were his efforts that Alexander felt himself called upon to bring the whole matter officially and authoritatively before the Christian public in a letter to the Bishop of Byzantium. In this epistle, which is still extant, the Alexandrine prelate sets forth the catholic doctrine, and the errors of Arius, and, after repelling from himself the slanders and reproaches to which he had been subjected, concludes his letter, which was evidently intended for the whole ecclesiastical community, with a caution to forbear all countenance of one who had been expelled from his own Church for principles so entirely subversive of the true faith.

Among the eminent persons whom Arius succeeded in drawing over to his party was Eusebius of Nicomedia, who had been translated from the bishopric of Berytus to that of Nicomedia, then the seat of the Eastern Empire. He was a man of penetrating genius and considerable learning; but it was his misfortune to have imbibed some of the disparaging tenets of Paul of Samosata respecting the deity of the Saviour. Eusebius having readily embraced the cause of Arius, and made many strenuous efforts to persuade Alexander to restore him, proceeded to summon a synod of the Bithynian bishops, whom he persuaded to declare in favour of Arius, and to write in his behalf to the Bishop of Alexandria; but Alexander stood unmoved by all these applications, being resolved to bar all entrance into the Church, as far as in him lay, to principles so ruinous, in his opinion, to its faith and orthodoxy. Another synod was assembled by the authority of this determined supporter of the truth, in which, by the unanimous resolution of one hundred bishops, Arius, and all the espousers of his opinions, were a second time declared excommunicated, and utterly severed from the Christian Church.

Determined on the maintenance of his dogma, that the Son was neither co-eternal nor co-essential with the Father, but that God was before the Son, Arius had again resource to the Bishop of Nicomedia, where his heterodox opinions found countenance and encouragement; and here his address and perseverance gathered around him a formidable co-operation. Such was the state of this controversy when Hosius, Bishop of Corduba, in Spain, who had borne illustrious testimony to the faith under the Diocletian persecution, was charged by Constantine the Great with his celebrated letter to both Alexander and Arius, entreating them to lay aside their contention about matters, as he styled them, of secondary moment, since they agreed in the great principles and duties of Christianity, and reminding them of the regard which was due from them to the quiet of their emperor, as well as to that of the Church. But neither the letter of Constantine, nor the good offices of Hosius, being at all effectual towards a settlement of the controversy, the Emperor resolved upon concentrating all the wisdom of the Church to set it, if possible, at rest, and for that purpose caused letters to be sent to all parts of his wide dominions to summon the bishops and clergy from every province to a great apostolical convention.

These were the circumstances which gave birth to that renowned assembly of which we have already had occasion to give some account in recounting the particulars of the life of Eusebius of Cæsarea. On the 19th of July, 325, that assembly met in the great hall of the imperial palace at Nice, as already mentioned; and here the tenets of Arius underwent the fullest investigation in the presence of Constantine. Several other subjects of general concernment to the Church were discussed; but the far greatest proportion of its attention was bestowed on the controversy raised by Arius, on which the zeal and fervour of Alexander, and of the Deacon Athanasius, who had accompanied him on his journey from Alexandria, were most conspicuous.

After some initiatory speeches and an earnest exhortation from the Emperor to peace and mutual forbearance, the debate was carried on with much vehemence. The cause of Arius had numerous advocates, being openly espoused by seventeen bishops. But the faith of the heretic being brought before the assembly by Eusebius of Nicomedia, it was indignantly rejected. The confession proposed by Eusebius of Cæsarea obtained the consent of the majority, subject to some objections made to its want of an exhibition of doctrine sufficiently explicit and definite to exclude the subtlety of Arius and his advocates, who found means to involve the question in ambiguous phrases and evasive expositions. The catholic Fathers, therefore, were not to be satisfied with a recognition in terms of the Divinity of the Son, but insisted on an interpretation of Scripture decisive of the doctrine that "the Son of God was of the same substance and essence with the Father," and the Nicene Creed was established on a basis excluding both Arians and semi-Arians from the catholic and orthodox Church. The words *ὁμοούσιον* and *ὁμοιούσιον*, however, seemed to many to be so near in sound, and to some so near in sense, that the distinction has been treated with levity by the profane, and with more or less regard, proportionate to the discriminative purity of their belief, by the theologians of the fourth and fifth centuries.

The tenets of Arius were publicly and formally condemned by the voice of this eminent Council, with the full sanction and support of the first Constantine. Arius himself was deposed and excommunicated, and, by the Emperor's command, banished to Illyricum; while by the same authority his writings were ordered to be burned, and the concealment of them made an offence severely punishable. The decision of the Council concerning Arius and his adherents was published by notices and synodical epistles to the churches, wherein the heresiarch's doctrines were denounced in terms of reprobation and abhorrence. And thus terminated this first General Council, after a session of about two months in duration. Eusebius, Bishop of Nicomedia, and Theognis, Bishop of Nice, who, although they had subscribed their consent, could not conceal their real aims and purposes, were soon after compelled to follow Arius into banishment; and, within a few months after his return from the Council, Alexander, the Bishop of Alexandria, died, thus making way for Athanasius, who, at the age of twenty-eight years, was raised to the vacant dignity by the suffrages of the clergy and the people.

Eusebius of Nicomedia and Theognis were soon at work to procure the release of Arius, the first step towards which object was to effect their own restoration to their sees. This was brought about by their professing to agree entirely with the faith of the Nicene Council, especially in relation to the consubstantial essence of the Trinity. The Emperor was deceived and persuaded, the bishops were reinstated, and forthwith every effort was used to procure the restoration of Arius to the communion of the Church at Alexandria. Athanasius was firm in his refusal; but the Emperor was not proof against the arts and persuasions of the Arian faction, and, having tried in vain by arguments and menaces to bend the resolution of the Alexandrine bishop, was so changed in his disposition towards him as to turn too ready an ear to the representations of his enemies.

The various fortunes of Athanasius, his orthodox valour, the schemes of his enemies for effecting his ruin, their multiplied efforts to subject him to imperial persecution, perpetually baffled but indefatigably renewed, invest his character with as much interest and importance as belong to any Father of the ancient Church of Christ.

After his refusal to attend at a council appointed to be held at Cæsarea, where he had only to expect a repetition of the charges which his enemies had been long in vain reiterating against him, he was compelled to obey the mandate of the incensed Emperor, who summoned him to the council assembled at Tyre, which was chiefly composed of Eastern bishops unfriendly to Athanasius. The crimes of which he was here accused were oppression, rape, and murder. The establishment of his innocence, and the discomfiture of his accusers, were the results of these proceedings. The murder of Arsenius, a Meletian bishop, charged upon Athanasius, was disproved in a manner and by circumstances as expository of the designs of his enemies as they were indicative of the tone and temper in which the affairs of the Church were administered at the time we are considering. To bring home to the accused the guilt of this atrocious deed, the hand of the murdered bishop was brought in a case, and produced to the synod; but when conviction and indignation, the natural result of such a testimony, were at their height, Arsenius was himself produced to the synod, having been led thither by a strong desire to witness its proceedings, and having been unable, though said to have been willing, to escape observation. His two hands were shown to the assembly, his cloak being drawn aside for the purpose, and the task of accounting for the third, which had been amputated, Athanasius left to his accusers.

The various other charges against Athanasius brought before the Council of Tyre were so partially and oppressively conducted under the predominating influence of the adherents of Eusebius of Nicomedia and the other enemies of the accused bishop, that, despairing of a fair inquiry, he withdrew from the assembly, resolving to appeal to the Emperor himself. The investigation continued, notwithstanding the absence of the accused, in the same spirit, and was easily brought to the desired conclusion in the condemnation of one who had now left the field undisputed to implacable enemies.

The synod had brought matters to this result when, by the Emperor's command, it was adjourned to Jerusalem, where the church erected to the honour of the Saviour was about to be dedicated. Here the cause of Arius was again taken into consideration, and so plausible was the declaration of his faith produced by him upon this occasion, that the restoration of him and his adherents was decreed by the Council.

The appeal of Athanasius produced an inquiry at Constantinople, under the eye of the Emperor, into the grounds of his impeachment and the conduct of his judges. But here a fresh attack awaited him.

He was accused of having expressed the intention of stopping the fleet which yearly transported corn from Alexandria to Constantinople. The Emperor, perhaps biassed by his tenacity on this subject, was too easily induced to listen to the witnesses employed to prove the charge. Athanasius was banished to Triers, in Germany—an act of the prince which, by the friends of the banished bishop, was considered as intended more for his protection than his punishment.

The triumph of Arius seemed now complete. Such, however, was the distrust in which he was still held, that a fresh summons brought him to Constantinople, where Constantine was again conciliated by a renewed statement of his entire agreement with his prince's faith, and accordingly commanded Alexander, the then bishop of Constantinople, to receive him into the communion of his Church. Alexander stoutly refused, and is said to have cast himself on the mercy of God, in a special prayer begging to have the evil of admitting the heretic into his Church averted from him. Arius was removed on the day following by the stroke of death, similar in circumstances, according to the historian Socrates, to the catastrophe which removed from among men the traitor Judas.

The death of the great Constantine, which took place in 337, about a year after that of Arius, deprived the Catholic Church of a tower of defence. Although his mind was often influenced by misleading counsels in his treatment of Athanasius, his adherence to the decrees of the great assembly at Nice was firm and constant.

In the division of the empire between his three sons, Constantine, Constans, and Constantius, the western parts of the empire were allotted to Constantine, whereof Triers, the place to which Athanasius had been sent, was a principal city, and had become the imperial residence. The patronage of this second Constantine restored Athanasius to his diocese, after a sojourn at Triers of about eighteen months. But his re-establishment excited anew the active hostility of his opponents, and Constantius, now seated on the throne of the eastern empire, was, by the persuasions of the Nicomedian bishop, and those who were first about his person, pre-engaged on the side of the Arians; and after the death of the first Constantine, the life of Athanasius was a series of romantic vicissitudes, exhibiting every change of fortune. Through all these the vigour and constancy of his character were signally predominant. About the year 339 Eusebius, the Bishop of Nicomedia, was advanced to the see of Constantinople, in the room of Paulus, who had been expelled by the violence of the Arian faction; and this elevation of their patron to a post so near the throne was followed by advantages which were speedily improved by the enemies of Athanasius. Accusations were multiplied against him, and the three imperial brothers were vehemently urged to concur in his destruction. To counteract these efforts Athanasius and his friends were equally stirring. A council of bishops was assembled at Alexandria, who not only pronounced, but proclaimed and vindicated, his innocence of all the charges brought against him in epistles to all the Catholic bishops.

The success of the cause of Athanasius was by these methods making a satisfactory progress, when the death of the second Constantine in the field against his brother Constans, whose dominions he was invading, deprived him of a powerful protector. About the same time a council, convened by the friends of the Arian cause, was held at Antioch, where Constantius was completing a magnificent church begun by his father. In this assembly a confession of faith was promulgated, for the most part adopting the terms of the Nicene Creed, but omitting the word "consubstantial;" and so prevailing were the charges against Athanasius laid before this Council, that his deposition was decreed, and after the appointment of a person of great learning of the name of Eusebius, who declined the offer, and was afterwards made Bishop of Emesa, the dignity was conferred on Gregory of Cappadocia, an obscure person, and a stranger to the province over which he was chosen to preside. The choice was, however, approved by Constantius, and an opposition being expected on the part of the people of Alexandria, it was considered necessary to settle Gregory in the possession of the see by a military escort. Athanasius left his post, and, repairing to Rome, a council was again called by Julius, the bishop of that city, on behalf of Athanasius, by the decree of which council Athanasius was a second time cleared from all the charges brought against him, and a letter from Julius to the bishops of the Council of Antioch conveyed, in the language of strong remonstrance, his disapproval of their proceedings. But before the letter arrived Eusebius of Constantinople was dead.

The see of Constantinople being thus again vacated, the people of that city brought back their ejected bishop, Paulus, who had made himself particularly acceptable to them; but the Arian party, by their own strength, together with the patronage of the Emperor Constantius, prevailed in their efforts in favour of Macedonius, whom they ordained bishop of Constantinople.

The contest between these opposing interests broke out into mutual violence and slaughter. Hermogenes, the Emperor's Master of the Horse, who was sent to quell the tumult and eject Paul, was dragged from his horse and killed by the enraged multitude. The tumultuous state of the capital was quieted by the arrival of the Emperor, who suspended Macedonius, and sent Paul into banishment (338).

Similar disorders attended the introduction of Gregory. The churches and houses of Alexandria were forcibly entered by the military, to compel his reception, and the recognition of his appointment to the see. Among others Potamo, the aged Bishop of Heraclea, who had lost an eye in the Diocletian persecution, was so miserably beaten that he soon after died from his wounds. Athanasius was at Rome or in Italy while these things were going on in Constantinople and Alexandria, and remained among his friends there for several years. In the meantime, a synod was held at Antioch, which, having continued their sittings for a considerable period, propounded a system of faith assuming to be corrective of the Nicene Confession, but drawn up by those who continued to be distinguished by the name of Eusebius, as the maintainers of the opinions bequeathed to them by Eusebius. But notwithstanding the predominancy of an unwholesome influence in this synod, many things were rightly determined, and the heresies of Paul of Samosata and others decisively condemned.

The Emperor Constans was now at Milan, where many bishops were assembled, as well in consultation on the case of Athanasius as for the purpose of composing, if possible, with the aid of the imperial authority, the agitations of the Christian world. To the bishops so assembled the articles agreed upon in the Synod of Antioch were presented, in the hope of obtaining their concurrence; but specious as it was, these Western prelates gave it no countenance, but declared themselves contented with the creed established in the great Council held at Nice.

While the Emperor Constans remained at Milan, Athanasius was summoned to that court, and the result of his communications with Constans was an earnest application by him to his imperial brother at Constantinople for the restoration of the Catholic bishops. This effort was so far successful as to induce Constantius to agree to assemble a council at Sardica, to which the subjects which had been discussed in the synods of Alexandria in 340, of Rome in 341, and of Milan in 346, were carried in 347. Sardica was a considerable city of Illyricum, conveniently situated for receiving the bishops of both the Eastern and Western Churches; and the numbers there assembled amounted to about one hundred and seventy. This council, numerous as it was, could not act as a general council, though ostensibly composed of prelates of both empires, there being such a want of agreement on preliminary matters as to induce the Eastern bishops, who insisted, as a primary step, on the excommunication of Athanasius, to hold a separate assembly; while the bishops of the West, of whom Hosius was the principal, met by themselves in council, wherein they declared their resolution to abide by the Nicene Creed; and having inquired as well into the case of Athanasius as that of Marcellus, acquitted them both of the heresies imputed to them.

The assembly of the Eastern bishops, which has never been acknowledged at Rome as a legitimate council, proceeded, in an irregular way, to depose Athanasius and the prelates who favoured his cause and opinions, while the more orthodox Fathers of the Western Church, having first pronounced for the sufficiency of the Creed of the Council of Nice, proceeded to reverse the sentence of the Synod of Tyre, and to depose the chief supporters of the Arian faction, among whom Gregory, who had violently intruded himself into the see of Alexandria, was denounced in terms of the strongest reprobation: which decrees and declarations of the Western Fathers were circulated by an epistolary document, signed, as it was said, by three hundred and forty-four bishops.

In the year 348, Gregory, the usurper of the see of Alexandria, died, and Constans asserted the innocence and the claims of Athanasius with so much firmness and effect, that, with the full consent of the Emperor of the East he was restored to the episcopal dignity, and provided with a conveyance and safe conduct to the city of Alexandria. In the course of his journey thither the assassination of Constans by the usurper Magnentius threatened the disappointment of his hopes at the moment of their accomplishment; but the Emperor of the East, though assailed by the enemies of the Bishop, was not diverted from his engagement, and Athanasius reached Alexandria in safety.

The re-establishment of Athanasius in the bishopric of Alexandria was complete. Letters were sent under the Emperor's seal to the bishops of the Catholic Church to inform them that the most reverend Athanasius, by the sentences of the synods and the imperial decrees, had been restored to his dignities, and that all former decrees and sentences were to pass into oblivion; and the people of Alexandria were to welcome their returning bishop, and abstain from all tumults and disorders.

Athanasius arrived at Alexandria after nine years of absence from it, and was received by the clergy and the people of the city with a joyous welcome, to which was added the congratulations of all the African bishops.

Soon after his return, the bishops of his province were convened to express their concurrence with the decrees of the

Council of Sardica, and the credit and authority of Athanasius rose so rapidly that the crowds assembled at the feasts of Easter and Pentecost were unable to find room in the churches. This triumphant state of things seems to have betrayed Athanasius into an act of indiscretion which was not long afterwards made use of by his adversaries to bring about another change in his varying fortunes. The great church which had lately been completed had not yet been dedicated, and the great convenience it offered as a receptacle for the overflowing numbers at this time assembled at Alexandria induced Athanasius, after much importunity, to allow this edifice to be filled by those who could find no other place of sufficient capacity to contain them.

Violent charges against him were brought before Constantius, whose strong inclinations in favour of the Arian cause predisposed him to listen to whatever had a tendency to turn the tide of fortune against the persecuted bishop. The assumption of an authority independent of the Emperor to celebrate the dedication of the great church at Alexandria without his warrant was made a ground of impeachment, to which was added the charge of a treasonable correspondence with Magnentius, which was supported by nothing but the simple fact of his having afforded hospitality to two bishops, who, on an embassy from Magnentius to Constantinople, had stopped on their way at the city of Alexandria.

About this time (351) the important and decisive battle was fought in which the army of Constantius obtained a complete victory over the forces under Magnentius on the plains of Mursa.[1] Constantius retired to a church dedicated to the martyrs at some distance from the scene of action, accompanied only by Valens, the bishop of Mursa, a zealous Arian, who stood in high favour with the Emperor. The decisive victory obtained by the army of Constantius was first communicated to the Emperor by the wily bishop, who had taken care to secure for himself a priority of intelligence, and is said to have affected to have been himself supernaturally informed of the event. Constantius lent a willing ear to the suggestion, and was not displeased to have his victory ascribed rather to the merit of Valens that to the valour of his own troops.

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[1] The city where this battle was fought, formerly Mursa, is now called Essek, on the banks of the Drave, over which at this place a remarkable wooden bridge, flanked with towers and supported on large wooden piles, was constructed in the year 1566, by the Sultan Soliman, to facilitate the march of his armies into Hungary.—See Busching's 'System of Geography,' vol. II. p. 90.

The ascendency acquired by this and other arts of the Bishop of Mursa operated powerfully in disposing the Emperor to listen to the representations by which the character and intentions of Athanasius were now assailed with renewed zeal and virulence. The contention between the conflicting parties was carried on with great violence, and a synod was held at Milan for the ostensible purpose of taking under consideration the conduct and opinions of Athanasius, and composing, if possible, the agitations of the Church. The bishops assembled in the palace, the Emperor himself sitting as judge or moderator; and under such superintendence, and with the influence and weight of Valens in full operation, nothing less could be looked for than the decree which condemned Athanasius. The violent conduct of the Arian faction consequent upon these proceedings, with the military on their side, forced the persecuted prelate to escape into the desert, leaving the city of Alexandria in the hands of his enemies, who made it a scene of hostility and outrage on the persons and property of the adherents of Athanasius.

The esteem in which Athanasius was held in Alexandria made it a difficult and dangerous task for the civil authorities to expel him from his seat in that city, and a force of five thousand soldiers was not considered too gigantic to effectuate a revolution which was to compel Athanasius to evacuate the episcopal throne, and to establish in his stead the infamous George of Cappadocia. The assault of the city by the troops of Syrianus, which took place while the Archbishop was performing his nocturnal devotions in the church of St. Theonas, is represented as an affair of blood and tumult, and it was from danger the most imminent that his important life was preserved. During his retreat from the violence of his enemies, which covered a period of six years of his existence, it is related that, by the edicts of Constantius, both the civil and military powers of the empire were urged to discover the place of his concealment, and that even liberal rewards were promised to any who should bring him alive or dead to those who were in pursuit of him.

While the Cappadocian bishop ruled in Alexandria with an iron sway, Athanasius found a safe shelter among the monks of the Thebais, in which retreat some of his treatises were composed, especially his apology for his flight, from which his enemies had drawn an argument in proof of his guilt, and a defence addressed to the Emperor, in which he met all the charges by which his character had been assailed.

Some of the more romantic parts of the story of this very extraordinary man may have no better foundation than the reports of his devotees and admirers. We feel it difficult to believe that, during his sojourn in places at the farthest practicable distance from Alexandria, he should have been able to evade the pursuit of emissaries dispatched everywhere in search of him, and to pay frequent clandestine visits to his friends and adherents in that city. The strange account of his hiding himself in a dry cistern, from which he escaped just in time to avoid the consequences of the treachery of a female slave, might be well calculated to amuse the lovers of what is novel and surprising; but Mr. Gibbon found, in the story of the asylum afforded him in the secret apartments of a virgin of exquisite beauty, and whose piety and chastity were not below her other perfections, a picture more gratifying to his ironical vein. He has borrowed the anecdote from Palladius, but he has given it to his readers with his accustomed banter in treating of matters involving the credit of the Christian character.

While Athanasius was thus absconding in the deserts of Africa, chased from one recess to another by the pursuit of his enemies, oppressed by the climate, and hardly within reach of the necessaries of existence, a synod of Arian bishops was convened at Sirmium, whose object it was to gain over, if possible, some of the distinguished among the Catholics. Their efforts were great to bring over Hosius, the aged Bishop of Corduba, a confessor under various persecutions, the friend of the great Constantine, and whose services, besides being often employed in composing the differences of the Church, had been eminently useful in directing the proceedings and decrees of the Nicene Council. Threats and persuasions were equally vain, till the Emperor, provoked and irritated by his firm rejection of every overture, put him under confinement at Sirmium for a year. In this situation, it appears, his usage was so hard that, being in extreme old age, his bodily anguish and weak spirits are said to have afforded a miserable triumph to his enemies. He was at length constrained to give his subscription to the Arian confession. Either malice or credulity gave currency to a story of the return of Hosius to Spain a persecutor of the orthodox; but the far more probable account comes to us with the authority of Athanasius, by which we are assured that the aged Father on the bed of death declared the repugnance with which he had signed the Arian Creed, and the compulsory treatment to which he had been subjected.

While the Emperor's court continued at Sirmium, another synod was held there under his sanction in furtherance of the Arian cause. This third Council of Sirmium was made remarkable by the apostasy of Liberius, Bishop of Rome. His firm resistance of the predominant creed had occasioned him to be banished to Beræa, in Thrace, where, with much repining[1] after his bishopric, he had passed more than two sorrowful years. His restoration was at length purchased by his consent to sign the new confession put forth by this council of Arian bishops; thus exhibiting a specimen of Papal infallibility of which the advocates of that doctrine may be freely left to make their own use as far as it will go in its support. To make this infallibility more infallible, the government of the see of Rome was committed to the restored bishop, in conjunction with Felix, who had filled the vacancy during the exile of Liberius. It seems, however, that the people would not allow the interference of Felix, who was compelled to quit his partnership in the see, and to leave Liberius the sole administrator of the affairs of that Church till his death, which happened in the year 366.

As the Councils hitherto had so ill succeeded in composing the dissensions of the Church, the Emperor fell upon a notable expedient for effectuating this desirable object—that of summoning a larger assemblage of ecclesiastical wisdom than had yet met in council; and, in furtherance of the same laudable purpose, it was considered advisable to assemble two councils—the one at Ariminum, or Rimini, in Italy, and the other at Seleucia, a city in the region of Isauria.

The Western Council, held at Rimini in the September of 359 A.C., was attended by four hundred bishops, being a greater number than had met together on any similar occasion. Very few Eastern bishops were there; but the bishops of the West resorted to the meeting from all parts of the Roman empire. Ursatius and Valens directed the movements of the Arian party, which, though not above eighty in number, showed great art and sagacity in the management of their own interests.

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[1] This appears from the letters of Liberius, which are still extant; especially in a letter of his to Vincentius, which is given in St. Hilary's works.

The first act of the Council was a declaration of implicit adherence to the Nicene Creed, which was followed by the condemnation of the Arian doctrines, and a censure of the leading bishops by whom they were maintained. But when the result was laid before the Emperor, who was attended by the delegates from each side of the controversy, his prejudices co-operated so powerfully with the superior skill of the Arian advocates, that first the legates on the Catholic side, and eventually the bishops assembled at the Council of Rimini, were persuaded to attach less importance to the language importing the consubstantiality of the Godhead, and to allow the Arian Confession in that essential article to go forth as the admitted doctrine of the Council. But the fact, as far as it may avail in excuse for these Fathers, should not be forgotten, that orders were sent by Constantius to the Roman Prefect not to permit the Assembly to dissolve itself until it had yielded its assent to the new confession in its Arian form. What had thus been extorted by intimidation and surprise was retracted upon fuller consideration, and the error into which they had fallen, openly and repentingly confessed and abjured. The meeting of the Council in Seleucia had a vain and indecisive termination. A contention arose among them, and a difference of opinion divided the assembly into two parties, one under the direction of Acacius, Bishop of Cæsarea, and the other under that of George, the ill-constituted Bishop of Alexandria, the number of whose adherents amounted only to about thirty of the prelates. The party of Acacius contended for the abolition of the Nicene Creed, and that of George of Alexandria for retaining that symbol, omitting the *ὁμοούσιον*, or word importing consubstantiality. In addition to these two parties, so mutually opposed on the subject of the Nicene Creed, a third was generated in the course of the debate, which contended for the adoption of the creed framed some years before at Antioch, which creed was subscribed by a great part, those who opposed being shut out from the Council. The followers of Acacius revenged themselves by drawing up another confession, differing from both the Nicene and the Antiochian creeds, to which about forty bishops gave their signatures. This Acacian confession was warily and ambiguously worded; but on an examination, assisted by interrogatories, it was ascertained that the similitude of the Son to the Father was represented as not even a similitude in substance, but in will only; and the deposition of Acacius, and the condemnation of the tenets of him and his party, followed.

The Acacians were beforehand with their adversaries in notifying this result of the conference at Seleucia to the Emperor, and soon succeeded in engaging him on their side. To promote their objects he was persuaded to summon another council at Constantinople. Prelates to the number of fifty attended, and even these were soon divided into two parties, the one maintaining the Semiarian or Homoiousian doctrine, with Basil of Ancyra and Eustathius of Sebastia; and the other party the Heterousian, under the direction of Matis, Bishop of Chalcedon, and Eudoxius; these last distinguishing the Son from the Father both in essence and nature. An ostensible confirmation of the Confession of Ariminum, or Rimini, brought this Synod of Constantinople to an apparent but hollow agreement.

Another synod took place at Antioch in 360 A.D. under the sanction of the Emperor, which still only renewed and subdivided the controversies; and in less than two years after this fruitless convention, Constantius was carried off by a fever, while marching into the west to oppose the hostile movements of his nephew Julian, before he had accomplished the forty-fifth year of his age, after a vacillating career, in which the course of events had kept his mind at a stretch beyond its natural capacity, and exhausted it on topics of wearisome and interminable debate.

On Julian's coming to the empire, the banished bishops were restored to their dioceses and confiscated estates. But this prosperous beginning was quickly succeeded by a very altered state of things, and the clergy soon found themselves to be the objects of the new Emperor's aversion. They were stripped of their honours and emoluments, with this sarcastic remark from the mouth of Julian, "that being relieved from the weight and incumbrance of their temporal possessions, they might the more easily obtain the kingdom which was promised to the poor." But the return of Athanasius to his former station was hastened by an event of a violent and sanguinary character. George of

Cappadocia, as archbishop of Alexandria, had for some time enjoyed the fruits of his tyranny, cruelty, and rapacity; but the people at length took their cause into their own hands, and in the December of 361 their fury became irresistible. The public authorities in the name of the new Emperor had thrown him into the common prison, but in a few weeks afterwards the prison doors were forced open, and the obnoxious prelate was made to pay the penalty of his abuse of power by a cruel death inflicted by the hands of an enraged multitude. When vengeance was satiated and the tumult ended, Athanasius was brought in triumph to the city, and reinstated in his authority. The orthodox party was again triumphant, and the Catholic bishops, whose faith and confession again gained the ascendant, assembled in council, and recognised and proclaimed the doctrine of the Holy Trinity in the full terms and import of the Nicene Creed.

The mind of Julian saw "no beauty" in the Saviour of mankind that he "should desire Him;" but, on the contrary, was turned with favour towards the abominations of the pagan superstition. Athanasius was the great obstacle in the way of the indulgence of that perverse propensity; and hardly was the harassed prelate reseated on his throne, when the peremptory edict of the Emperor authorised and commanded his exclusion and banishment. In obedience to the imperial mandate Athanasius proceeded in a boat along the Nile towards Thebais, but, being closely followed by an officer, ordered himself to be carried back to meet him, and passing unsuspected by him, arrived again in Alexandria, where he lay concealed till his danger was terminated by the early stop put to the career of Julian, who sank on the field of battle mortally wounded by the Persian sword in the month of June, 363, and in the thirty-second year of his age, after a reign of two years.

The elevation of Jovian to the throne of the empire reversed the condition of the Christians and the pagans, and gave to the former an ascendency of which they were never again to be deprived. The mind of the new Emperor was not only decided in favour of the Christians, but was determined towards the cause of Athanasius and his followers with a strong predilection. The Nicene Creed was published through the empire as a compendium of the true faith, and Athanasius was seated again in the full enjoyment of his dignities and possessions. The first act of that extraordinary man after his restoration was his convention of a synod of bishops; among the proceedings of which assembly was the dispatch of a letter to the Emperor, setting before him the Creed established at the Council of Nice, which affirmed the Son to be of the same substance with the Father, and joined the Holy Ghost with the Father and the Son in the Godhead of the Holy Trinity; and contrasting this sacred belief and confession with the unwarrantable dogmas of the Arians, who maintained the Son of God to have been made out of nothing, and that there was a time when He had no existence, being a work of creation, with an origin and a mutable essence. The Arians also strove to advance their cause with the new Emperor; but he had made himself well acquainted with the merits of the controversy, and, with great promptitude of decision, declared his adoption of the Nicene Creed, and took Athanasius and his followers under the imperial patronage.

The reign of Jovian was of short continuance, having a duration only of eight months. He was succeeded by Valentinian in the west, and by Valens in the eastern part of his dominions. The Catholics, under which designation Athanasius and his adherents were comprehended, found a friend in Valentinian, while his brother Valens, shortly after his baptism by Eudoxius, Bishop of Constantinople, took the Arians under his protection. Nevertheless, the firmness of the people of Alexandria in the cause of their bishop, and the fear entertained of the resentment of Valentinian, suspended the persecution of Athanasius, and prevailed with Valens to permit the champion of the Nicene or Catholic faith to return quietly to his see of Alexandria, after a concealment for the space of four months in a monument belonging to his family.

From this time (about 365) Athanasius was suffered to pass his days in peace to the end of the year 373, which closed the vicissitudes of his earthly course at the age of seventy-five, after having held the rank and office of bishop for the period of forty-six years. It was an eventful period, in which the recorded incidents in the life of Athanasius afford the liveliest representation of the state and mutations of the Christian Church in that stage of its history. His historical books are expository of the ecclesiastical transactions which took place in his times, on which his own character was strongly impressed, and in the conduct and issues whereof his zeal and ability were principally instrumental and conspicuous. To his books we are indebted for what we know, not only of the general affairs of the Church during the above-mentioned period, but of the fate and fluctuations of the doctrines distinguished by the name of Catholic, which lived out all their temporary defeats, and ultimately triumphed in the title of Orthodox.

Besides some short expositions of the sacred writings, a life of St. Anthony, his four orations against the Arians, and a single discourse directed against the pagans, the products of his understanding and information have come to us chiefly in the form of letters and tracts. These are said to have supplied both Basil and Gregory of Nazianzus with their most efficacious arguments in the support of the tenets which, by the acquiescence of the Church Catholic, have been admitted to constitute the foundation of a saving faith.

The most learned investigators of the subject are agreed that Athanasius was not the author of the creed which commonly passes under his name, but which was not known to the Church till near a century after his time. It has, however, been generally considered as an epitome of his tenets on the great mystery of which it treats. To arrive at a clear understanding of the particular doctrines on this sublime subject entertained by Athanasius, our apprehension of the leading errors which, at the commencement of the fourth century, hovered about the orthodox standard, should be correct and clear. Sabellius, who became known by the peculiarity of his doctrines about the middle of the third century, seems to have admitted a Trinity, though not a Trinity of Persons. The distinction between the constituents of his Trinity was neither in essence or personality. The Father was one in essence, and the Word and Spirit were considered only as modifications of that essence, operatively and officially distinguished. Christ was regarded by him as actuated by that Divine energy or afflatus which, in a more orthodox creed, expressed the office of the Holy Ghost. Thus the Trinity of Sabellius was a Trinity of three modes of being consisting rather in names, imaginations, and notional properties, than in distinct subsistences. According to him there was but one hypostasis or Essence, involving the attributes of Father, Son, and Holy

Ghost, without any distinction of personality. It was, in effect, the predication of three Divine energies or operations in one integral, indivisible Essence.

Arius, on the other hand, divided the substance, making the Son a creature, and yet a creature partaking of the Divine Essence. According to him there was a time when the Son was not, a time when He was brought into existence. He was, therefore, neither co-equal nor co-eternal with the Father, though inconceivably greater than all other created existences.

Thus Sabellius and Arius stood in direct opposition to each other; Sabellius asserting the Trinity to be only one Substance numerically considered, but existing under three several conceptions or modifications of power and operation; while Arius maintained the Son to be distinct from the Father, separated from Him by the immeasurable distance between Creator and creature—between infinite Perfection and an originated, mutable, and defectible being.

The Trinity of Plato seemed to hold a middle place between that of the Sabellians and of the Arians. It was, as respected the Essence, homo-ousian or consubstantial, not by numerical unity, but by identity of nature, joining the three hypostases under one predication, as individuals are comprehended under a common species. In the theory of Plato the Three Persons were declared to be co-eternal, as was implied in the Divinity or Numen under which they were comprehended. The characters of his hypostases were representative of infinite wisdom, goodness, and love, not considered as accidents but as substances, in gradual subordination, the second to the first and the third to the second. The theory of the Platonists refused to concede the divisibility of the Divine Essence. They represented the essential dependence and gradual subordination of the Persons under various similitudes as the relation between sound and its echo, the successive circles caused by the falling of a heavy body into the water, the stamp or impression on wax, the image reflected from a mirror. But to illustrate this essential dependence, nothing seemed so apposite as the light propagated from a luminous body, under which similitude the principle of subordination and the consequent inequality of the Persons seemed to be consistent with the idea of consubstantiality.

The continuity of existence (*συνέχεια*) which was resembled to the relation of the sun's light to the sun itself, seemed to bring the doctrine of Plato to a near approach to the essential unity maintained by the Nicene Fathers. Athanasius himself has made use of the illustration, and though that great illuminator of the Church cannot be charged with countenancing the doctrine of essential subordination in accordance with the Platonic theory, yet something like a gradual order in the Persons of the Trinity seems to have been implied in the terms used in treating of this mysterious subject by the highest authorities in the Christian Church during the first three centuries, as will appear by consulting Justin Martyr, Athenagoras, Tertullian, Clemens Alexandrinus, Origen, Gregory Thaumaturgus, Dionysius of Alexandria, and many others of the same early period. To the Fathers of the fourth century, and to the general tenor of the language of Athanasius, we are indebted for the most stringent terms in which the doctrine of the Trinity can be offered to the comprehension of man. The mysterious union, which had been more loosely expressed, began to be considered and described as a mutual in-being, for which the Greek tongue supplied the term ἐμπεριχώρησις, whereby the import and extent of our Saviour's declaration, "I am in the Father, and the Father in Me," appeared to be conveyed, making the Persons of the Trinity, numerically and singularly one in essence, μία φύσις, μία οὐσία, εἶς Θεὸς, not merely united by consent of the will, but having the self-same will, the self-same energy, μίαν ἐνέργειαν, nothing being peculiar to the Son but the economy of the Incarnation.

Though the genuine Platonists suppose the three hypostases to be one divinity, μία Θεοτης, yet they do not make this divinity to be numerically one, singular, and indivisible, having no distinct essences; whereas the orthodox Fathers maintain the Three Persons, or hypostases, to be one only Essence, Subsistence, and Godhead, each being God, but in the same essential unity; the whole being each, and each being the whole: the Essence being single, entire, and common, the Persons, individual, peculiar, and circumscribed. But neither the Nicene Fathers, nor Athanasius himself, have always made use of terms whereby all ambiguity has been excluded. They sometimes appear by their language to have conceived a consubstantial Trinity as referable to a common nature, rather than to an essential unity—a generic or specific rather than a singular and numerical identity. But the terms used in that august symbol, the Athanasian Creed, as well as the dominant and more stringent import of the expressions adopted by the greater and more catholic authorities of the early Church, have couched the sacred mystery in language of the nearest approach to the voice and affirmations of Scripture. And without doubt it would have been safer and wiser to have left the plain words in which it was announced by the Saviour, and whereby both the oneness and the inexistence of the Triune Divinity were simply propounded, were it not that new heresies made it necessary to multiply its defensive negations and its definitive statements.

On a subject so vast and profound as the eternal Trinity of the Godhead, words of adequate expression could hardly be furnished even by the most abundant of all languages; rather, perhaps, the danger of indistinctness and uncertainty in the tenses and shades of meaning would be increased by the facilities and resources of the Greek language. To expound the mystery of the Trinity is plainly impossible to human intelligence; and in the effort to lessen the distance at which it stands beyond the limits of man's comprehension, reason is baffled, imagination is distressed, and finite and infinite are confounded. It is our joy and comfort that the precious truth has its retreat and sanctuary in the words of Holy Writ, where it lives in a light of its own, and wears a dignity with which no possibilities of descriptive language could invest it. Upon the whole, we may consider that venerable document, known by the title of the Creed of Athanasius, as a compendium of the theology of that Father, and as embodying the gracious terms in which our Saviour and His Apostles have briefly propounded the great mystery of the Triune Godhead; and with this fact before us it is not easy to overrate the obligations of the Christian worshipper to one whose writings have supplied the materials for such a model of sound divinity, wherein the Sabellians on the one hand, and the Arians on the other, are effectually disarmed; and the union of the two natures in Christ Jesus is decisively maintained against the Cerinthians, the Photinians,[1] the Socinians, and the Unitarian deists.

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[1] Photinus was a bishop of Sirmium, who in the year 343 maintained opinions full of error concerning the Trinity. He held that though the Scriptures speak of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, we are to understand of them only one Person—that He whom the Scriptures call the Word of God was neither a Substance nor a Person, but a certain Divine emanation, which became united with the

The creed called the Creed of Athanasius, as a compendium of the faith of that great light of the Church, brings him before the pious believer as an object of his peculiar veneration. It succeeded the two other forms, called the Apostles' and the Nicene Creeds, which, after much contention and some reverses, now hold their places with equal honour in our English Liturgy. The Nicene did at one time supersede the document distinguished by its nominal ascription to the Apostles in homage to its antiquity, having been appointed to be read in the Church by Timothy, the Archbishop of Constantinople, and the third Council of Toledo, in the reign of the Emperor Anastasius, who, having governed the empire twenty-seven years, died in 521 A.C. After a short suspension the Apostles' Creed recovered its full estimation, and for ages has been regarded by the faithful in Christ as the most venerable among the monuments of sacred antiquity.

The terms also of another creed are found in the works of Athanasius, which interposes a guard between some of the refinements of a presumptuous philosophy and the purity of a scriptural faith. In this enunciation of doctrine he expressly opposes the generation of the Son to the emission by division or section so wildly imagined by the Gnostics. "We believe," says he, "in the only begotten Word, born of the Father, without beginning of time, from all eternity, being not a division from an impossible nature or an emission, but a perfect Son.[1] It is a mystery past finding out. The Holy Ghost by the prophet saith, 'Who shall declare His generation?'" Not only the eternal generation of the Son, but His incarnation, appears in the writings of Athanasius with authoritative distinctness. The blasphemies of Cerinthus, Ebion, and Harpocrates, in affirming the generation of the Son to have been from Joseph, as also the heresy of the Marcionites, according to whose more extravagant

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extraordinary Man born of a Virgin by the Holy Ghost, which Holy Ghost was a Virtue or Energy proceeding from God, and not a Person; in other words, an Attribute only of God. From these vague notions the inference arose that Jesus Christ was a mere man, who before His birth into the world had no existence but in the Divine foreknowledge, and only came into being when born of Mary by the Holy Spirit. God, it seems, on account of His excellent gifts, adopted Him for His Son, and thus He was called His Son. The profane vagaries of this, and other like fanatics, would hardly merit notice, but to show to what wild and absurd errors the paths of human speculation and conjecture lead, when the simple teaching of Scripture is for a moment forsaken.

[1] See 'Expos. Fid.' vol. I. p. 240: *Οὔτε παραβολὴν ἀλλ' Υἱὸν αὐτοτελῆ.*

and profane reverie, Christ brought with Him a body from Heaven to pass through the body of the Virgin, as water through a pipe, and, lastly, the heresy of Apollinaris, who, with his great name and powerful advocacy, asserted the assumption by Christ of a partial humanity—of the flesh of man without the human or rational soul—were all met and combated in the catholic and orthodox expositions of Athanasius.[1]

Thus were established by this eminent person doctrines and principles of pure Christianity, which, in the judgment of the profoundest of the Fathers, have fixed the structure of our faith upon the rock of Scriptural testimony. The edifice of our trust and hope has, in the Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian Creeds, solid outworks to guard its accesses, monuments of its venerable grandeur, and pledges of its promised perpetuity.

In following the course of Athanasius through the frequent vicissitudes and reverses by which his courage and perseverance were so severely tried, we witness a constancy which it is the property only of the faith that can remove mountains to inspire. His learning in the school of Christ escaped the contagion of the Gentile philosophy, and if his writings in general have not the savour of academical acquirements, we may discern in them the traces of that grave, sagacious, patient, and courageous zeal which withstood the violence of despotic resentment, disarmed the anathemas of councils, sustained his steps over the graves of martyrs, and supported his resolution while wandering through desert places a fugitive from the malice and fury of his enemies. Secure in conscious virtue and the support of a righteous cause, prosperity and adversity in quick alternation were equally powerless to divert his resolution from its settled purpose, or shake a fortitude which rested on an unfailing foundation. The historian of the decline and fall of imperial Rome suspended his quarrel with the memories of saints and martyrs to indulge his eloquence in drawing the character of Athanasius. Called upon by claims too imperative to be denied their conspicuous place in his history, he has, amidst cold unscriptural details of the various dogmas of the Trinitarian controversies, yielded the reluctant powers of his pencil to the portraiture of this champion of orthodoxy.

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[1] "Although these contentions," says Hooker, "were cause of much evil, yet some good the Church hath reaped from them, in that they occasioned the learned and sound in faith to explain such things as heresy went about to deprave. And in this respect the Creed of Athanasius was, both in the Eastern and Western Churches, accepted as a treasure of inestimable price by as many as had not given up even the very ghost of belief. Then was the Creed of Athanasius written, howbeit not then so expedient to be publicly used as now in the Church of God."—Hooker, 'Eccl. Pol.' v. § 42.

From Athanasius the passage is easy and natural to Hilary, the native and Bishop of Poictiers in France. They were contemporaries, and alike the most distinguished champions, the one in the Eastern, the other in the Western Churches, of the orthodox faith. Hilary was the offspring of pagan parents, to whom the voice of antiquity has assigned an elevated rank, and who appear to have bestowed on their son an education suited to his liberal birth and expectations. His conversion from paganism to the profession of the Christian faith seems to have been the fruit of his mature age; but his memory has not the advantage of a consistent and creditable biography, and we are left to gather as we can the actions and events of his life from what incidentally occurs in his own writings.

The want of authentic sources has been supplied by a multitude of prodigies and fictions, for which his biographer was obviously indebted to his own invention. In his work on the Trinity he gives some account of his conversion, and we are there informed of the steps of the progress by which his mind was conducted to Christianity from the superstition in which he had been educated. His conversion seems to have borne a strong testimony to the force of truth. It was the genuine, and, as appears by his own account of it, the unaided result of a candid and careful perusal and study of the Holy Scriptures alone; and by this process of inquiry he was gradually led to the profession of the doctrines of the Nicene faith, before he had seen the Creed of that Council, or had been made acquainted with the grounds of the Arian controversy.

He attributes much to his own reflections, as preparing his mind for the acceptance of all that is revealed in the Divine record; and, commencing with the great I AM in the Old Testament, he seems to have proceeded gradually through all parts of the Word and Testimony, Old and New, till the general scheme of man's redemption became plain to his apprehension; and after his baptism, he fully resigned his understanding and his reason to the more mysterious truths which rest upon the Divine authority.

Of his early life we have very little authentic account. We are told, however, that he was a married man, and had an only daughter, called Abra, on whose education in the duties and exercises of religion he bestowed an affectionate care. With his wife he continued to cohabit after he was ordained bishop, which event took place in 354 A.C., neither any rule of the Church nor his own convictions being opposed, in that respect, to the laws of nature and Providence. His life was, however, eminently strict, even from his youth, and, after his conversion, conformed to the severest sanctity of his divine vocation. His parts and abilities were of the highest kind, and the most important affairs of the Church, as well as the defence of its distinguishing doctrines, fell naturally under the ascendency of his wisdom and discretion.

The Arian faction having received many discomfitures in the East, the success of the struggle in the West was mainly dependent upon the able and resolute activity and perseverance of Hilary. Two synods were procured by the zealots of the Arian heresy at Arles and Milan to pass sentence of condemnation on the Athanasian cause there. By the exertions and intrigues of Saturninus, Ursatius, and Valens, three Arian bishops,[1] that obnoxious cause prevailed, and a synod was afterwards, in 356, procured to be convened at the town of Bessières, near Arles, within the diocese of Saturninus, where the orthodox Creed was supported by Hilary with extraordinary vigour and perseverance. His effective exposition in writing of the arts and disguises practised by his adversaries was not however allowed to be publicly read, and the cause he advocated was compelled to give way to a hostile combination with the Emperor at its head. Hilary was sent into exile to Phrygia, where he passed some of the four ensuing years of his life, during which he is considered to have composed his work upon the Holy Trinity, in twelve books, in which the subjects of controversy which then so violently agitated the Church are correctly set forth and examined. After passing about three years in exile, Hilary was called to attend at the Council of Seleucia by those into whose hands the management of the questions to be there discussed had been placed by the Arian partialities of the Emperor. All he could effect at that council was to clear himself of the charge of having favoured the doctrines of Sabellius, in his mode of handling the mysteries of the Trinity. The Nicene faith having been trampled upon at that Council, and there being nothing to be done but to try the force of argument with the Emperor himself, he made three several efforts, by earnest petitions to Constantius, to be permitted to debate with his adversaries in his presence; and not succeeding in these endeavours to bring his opponents into a personal controversy with him, he composed and published a discourse, which some have called, from its asperity of language, an invective against Constantius, wherein he introduces the following extraordinary description of the deplorable uncertainty and confusion into which the opinions of the professors of Christianity had fallen, as a consequence of the general substitution of arbitrary hypotheses for the sure word of Scripture. "It is most deplorable and injurious that as many creeds exist as inclinations, as many doctrines as modes of life; that as many blasphemies spring up as vices, whilst creeds are either written as we please, or interpreted as we please. And though, as there is but one God and one Lord and one baptism, so there is but one faith, yet we have fallen from the only faith, and, whilst we multiply creeds, we are fast coming to the condition of having no creed at all. Whilst we are disputing about words, searching into novelties, catching at ambiguities, whilst we have such difficulties in agreeing, while each becomes an anathema to the other, scarcely one belongs to Christ. Rare judges of heavenly sacraments! We calumniate each other while professing our faith in God. We make creeds every year, and even every month; we repent when we have made them, we defend those who repent, we anathematise those whom we defended. We condemn either other people's opinions in our own, or our own in other people;[1] mutually devouring one another, we are at length mutually consumed." The address concludes with an account of his faith set before the Emperor, whose conduct he is not afraid to censure with unqualified severity.

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[1] Saturninus was Bishop of Arles, Ursatius of Singedunum, and Valens of Murcia, the leading supporters of Arianism in the West.

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[1] The censure passed by Hilary upon the state of the Oriental clergy in his own times is remarkable. "Absque Episcopo Eleusio et paucis cum eo, ex majore parte Asianæ decem Provinciæ, inter quas consisto, vere Deum nesciunt. Atque utinam penitus nescirent! cum procliviore enim venia ignorarent quam obtrectarent."—Hil. 'De Synodis, sive de Fide Orientalium,' c. 63, p. 1186, ed. Benedict. So that from this authority we may deduce a state of things which

Thus distinguished as the great champion of orthodoxy in the West, he proceeded, with his mind somewhat disburthened, to his place of exile; but being probably an offence to the Arian party in the East, he was at length permitted to return, and seat himself again in his bishopric of Poictiers, where he was received with every demonstration of joy and triumph. And now commenced his energetic course of successful efforts to bring back those bishops in the Gallic provinces who had been seduced by the Arian partisans, to the Catholic faith, till the clergy of France were brought to an universal consent in the maintenance of the doctrines of the Nicene Council, and, as a consequence, Saturninus was excommunicated by all the Episcopacy of France.

The tranquillity of the Church being thus in a great degree effected by the prudent and persevering zeal of this faithful bishop, the residue of his years was a period of comparative repose, with the exception of the vexatious interval during which he maintained a vigorous combat with the heretical opinions of Auxentius of Milan, who, though often excommunicated by the Catholic prelates, had obtained an edict from Valentinian to establish him in his see.

After a contest in which the wily Bishop of Milan made his part good at court by various subterfuges and denials, Hilary, unable to obtain a candid hearing, contented himself with writing a tract against his adversary. An account of the various transactions of the synods held after the Council of Ariminum, or Rimini, seems to have been his latest production. His death took place at the beginning of the year 367 at Poictiers, about seven years after his return from exile. Among the Fathers of the Christian Church, no one, with so much renown, has left so scanty a memorial. Venantius Fortunatus succeeded him in the bishopric of Poictiers about two hundred years after his death, and compiled his history in twenty books, in which the legends of fiction and fraud left no space for facts and truths which

presents a sad picture of the Eastern Church in the fourth æra of its development, so often put before us by the disturbers of our English Church as the period in which Christianity presented itself in its most beautiful proportions. Not in the wide extent of the ten provinces of Asia (according to the testimony of Hilary) could there be found, except in the Bishop of Eleusium and a few others, the true knowledge of God.

would probably have entitled the name of Hilary to the real homage of an unabused posterity. A great obscurity hangs over the life and writings of this celebrated bishop; but we are made acquainted with too much of him to adopt him as the theme of unrestricted eulogy. His style, though bold and figurative,[1] was defective in grace and perspicuity, and his invectives were sometimes tinctured with much asperity, where the objects of his correction had claim, on Christian grounds, to more moderation and courtesy. As an expositor of Scripture he has displayed both ingenuity and capacity; and the great controversy on the Trinity, in which the orthodox argument was chiefly entrusted to him in Western Christendom, was handled by his pen with great ardour and ability. But his eager pursuit after allegorical senses and recondite meanings made him very often an unsafe guide, and seemed sometimes entirely to overmaster his better judgment, and fritter away the solidity of his understanding. He appears to have been pleased with putting the literal text of Scripture in the least acceptable sense, to be furnished thereby with a sufficient pretext for his allegorical interpretations; and where the passage was too obvious to be mistaken, or to be perplexed in its literal construction, a process was always at hand to give it some tortuous application or to elicit a mystery from within the folds of its borrowed ambiguity. Men of this cast are under the influence of a too high estimate of their own understanding, generally discovering itself in the tone and temper which they carry into their controversies; and it would probably be doing no injustice to Hilary to impute to him a roughness towards his opponents proportioned to his tenderness for his own conceits. In Psalm cxlvii. he understands by the clouds, wherewith God is said to cover the heavens, the writings of the Prophets; and by the rain which He prepares for the earth, the evangelical doctrine; by the mountains which bring forth grass, the Prophets and Apostles; by the beasts, men; and by the young raven, the Gentiles; at the same time reminding us that "it would not only be erroneous, but very irreligious, to take these things in the literal sense."[2] This may be taken as a specimen of his strange dealing with the majestic plainness of

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[1] He was said by Jerom to have displayed the Cothurnus Gallicanus in the pomp of his diction.

[2] "Hæc ita intelligere, non dicam erroris, sed irreligiositatis est."—Comm. in Psal. cxlvii.

Scripture. If further proofs are desired, they may be found in his observations on Psalm cxxxvi., on Matt. vi. 26, and on Matt. viii. 28 *et seq.*, and Matt. x. 29.

These are liberties taken with the Word of God which are doubtless of injurious tendency, and, being indefinite in their consequences, it is not easy to calculate their mischievous results. But Hilary suffered his mind to wander into speculations involving the fundamentals of Christianity, having neither analogy of faith, nor consistency of doctrine, nor warrant of Scripture to support them.[1] He held that the crucifixion of our Lord was unattended with real suffering, though passively endured. The nature of Christ's body, he maintained, was such that it had no sensibility to the stripes and violences to which it was subjected. "And this," says he, "is the man sent from God, having a body capable of suffering (for suffer He did), but not having a nature capable of pain. When the blows fell upon Him, His flesh wounded, and His body suspended, these injuries brought with them, indeed, the stress and violence of passion, but they wrought no pain in Him. In like manner, as when a sword is thrust through water, or fire, or air, it goes through and pierces, but it wounds them not: these things not having a nature to be wounded or hurt, though it is the nature of such weapons to produce such effect."[2] And again, "The passion of Christ was undergone by Him voluntarily, to make an acknowledgment that pains were due; not that He that suffered was at all touched by them."[3] ". . . He was really free from all pain, because He is God."[4]

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[1] Hilary was far from precise in his use of terms. He sometimes confounds nature with person, and uses the phrase "tres substantiæ;" and it has been said to have been his object to mediate between the Christians of the East and the West; and that he introduced some confusion of doctrine by his endeavour to compromise difference of opinions.

[2] "Et Homo ille Deus est, habens ad patiendum quidem corpus, ut passus est; sed naturam non habens ad dolendum. Naturæ enim propriæ ac suæ corpus illud est, quod in cælestem gloriam transformatur in morte . . . . In quo quamvis aut ictus inciderit, aut vulnus descenderit, aut nodi concurrerint, aut suspensio elevarit, afferunt quidem hæc impetum passionis, non tamen dolorem passionis inferunt: ut telum aliquod, aut aquam perforans, aut ignem compungens, aut aëra vulnerans, omnes quidem has passiones naturæ suæ infert, ut perforet, ut compungat, ut vulneret, sed naturam suam in hæc passio illata non retinet, dum in natura non est vel aquam forari, vel pungi ignem, vel aëra vulnerari, quamvis natura teli sit vulnerare, compungere, et forare."—Hil. 'De Trin.' lib. x.

[3] "Suscepta voluntarie est (passio) officio quidem ipsa satisfactura pœnali, non tamen pœnæ sensu læsuræ patientem."—Hil. in Ps. liii.

[4] "Putatur dolere, quia patitur; caret verò doloribus ipse, quia Deus est."—Id. in Ps. cxxxviii. In the preface to the Bene-

Thus does the Bishop of Poictiers lay down his sense of the true import of the stupendous transaction of the Cross, which he supports by reasoning that, with the sweeping train of its consequences, carries away at once all the penal virtue of the atonement, with all the agony, all the distress, all the drops of bloody sweat, all the preparation of mind for the approaching hour, and, lastly, all the bitterness of the cup from which the human nature unsustained by the Divine would fain have withdrawn the trembling lip, but which, in the strength of the hypostatic union, the Saviour Christ heroically exhausted: all this, and how much more, which belonged to the realities of that night of struggle, and the ensuing scene of blood, thus detached from the great transaction, reduces it to a terrific pageant, without merit, without satisfaction, without glory, without salvation! And yet these were the thoughts of St. Hilary, one of the most renowned of the Fathers of the fourth century, whose vagrant spirit of research was unsatisfied with only transgressing the borders of Scripture

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dictine edition much is said to vindicate St. Hilary respecting his opinions concerning Christ's sufferings. Some of the Fathers are arrayed against Claudian Mamertus, a Gallic poet, and a censurer of St. Hilary's opinion, the author of two epistles, 'De Statu Animi,' and a poem against various errors; and some passages are produced to show that the passion of the Cross was treated by St. Hilary as real and not nominal suffering; and St. Jerom especially is quoted as expressing great contempt for the sentiments entertained in disparagement of St. Hilary's doctrine. But the defence is general, as is also that of Aquinas and Bonaventura.

The preface defends him thus:—"Ut quia divinitatis suæ non est abolita natura, omnibus quæ infirma sunt, salva majestatis suæ dignitate perfunctus est, ex quo sequitur ut universa quæ in assumpta carne pertulit, in Dei assumentis personam inciderent potius quam inessent in propria illius natura."

It has been said that Hilary was thrown into the adoption of unguarded expressions in combating the opinion of Apollinaris and his followers. But the following is the language of the preface on this point:—"Assumta caro, id est totus homo, passionum est permissa naturis, nec tamen ita permissa ut passionum conficeretur injuriis. Quasi diceret, assumtus homo, tum secundum corpus tum secundum animam passionibus nostris permissus est quatenus naturales sunt, non quatenus injuriæ et contumeliosæ. Porro homini naturale est, ut cum patitur corpus anima motu aliquo moveatur, et quod motum illum quoties vult comprimere non valeat, injuriosum illi, utpote peccati pœna, atque contumeliosum est. Eo pacto licuit negare quod Christus senserit dolorem corporis nostri, ac dicere "pro nobis dolet, at non doloris nostri dolet sensu . . . . . . Nec minus congruenter fidei nostræ demonstrat, Christum, etiam secundum hominem, cum ex verbi virtute et non nostro concipiendi modo originem habeat, passionibus nostris obnoxium non fuisse, quamvis eis se sponte permiserit."

It appears, upon the whole, that Hilary, in his zeal to confute the errors of Apollinaris, was carried too far towards the opposite extreme. His apprehension of danger from that quarter is always marked by the words Salva Divinitate, with which he guards his references to the passion of the Cross. But, in saving the Divinity, he ascribed to it such a control of the humanity as to mitigate or annihilate that amount of suffering on which rests the great work and consummation of the atoning sacrifice.

simplicity. The hypothesis of a corporeal soul, doubts of the perfect sufficiency of the salvation wrought by the blood of the Cross, implied in the dogma of an ulterior purgation by an indefatigable fire, with other speculations alike unauthorised and unhallowed, are found in the writings of this Father, affording testimony to the value of the warning contained in the record itself, to forbear tampering with the written Word by supplement or suppression.

Such were the prelates, such the councils, such the churches, and such the variable and vacillating adoptions of imperial prejudice or ignorance, in the middle of the fourth century of the Christian æra. Had it not been for the plain speaking of the great Register of Truth, the minds of men would have wandered back as far from the religion of Christ as in the grossest æra of heathen superstition. But the Church happily survived in the model and mould of Scripture, which preserved its authentic form and impression amidst all the perversities and extravagancies of human invention.

Among the Christian worthies of the fourth century our eyes are naturally next turned to Basil and Gregory, who stood as faithful sentinels before the portals of the Eastern Church, to protect it from the assaults of Arianism and the various heresies of which it was the source. Basil, to whom the name of Great was given by his contemporaries to denote his claim to admiration for qualities which, while they highly exalted his character, raised him to an influence and rank in the Church, investing his name with peculiar distinction, was born about the year 328 A.D. at Neocæsarea, a city of Cappadocia Pontica, in the Lesser Asia. He was the eldest of four sons, who owed their birth and early education to parents distinguished by their descent, and whose care of their children was well rewarded by the lustre of their attainments. How much Basil was indebted to the special instructions of his mother Emmelia and his grandmother Macrina appears in more than one of his epistles. Macrina had been an auditor of the celebrated St. Gregory Thaumaturgus, and having acquired her knowledge and her principles during a period of peril and personal sacrifice, she was the more alive to their value and industrious in their propagation. With these elements, derived from domestic culture, Basil proceeded to Antioch, where he studied under Libanius, whose fame as an orator and philosopher was at that time universal. From Antioch he removed to Cæsarea in Palestine, then famous for its schools of learning, where he is said to have soon surpassed all his fellow-students. From Cæsarea he proceeded to Constantinople, and after studying there under eminent professors, he repaired to Athens, where he met again his school-fellow, Gregory of Nazianzum, and here that close and constant friendship took place between them which was terminated only by death, and was, during their joint lives, their mutual ornament and support.

Basil pursued his studies at Athens with the assistance of Himerius and Proæresius, two celebrated orators and sophists, both high in favour with the Emperor Julian, of whom the latter, an Armenian, had at that time all the youth of Cappadocia and Bithynia for his scholars, and was honoured with a statue of brass at Rome. Having duly improved his time at Athens, and being weary of the light character of the people, Basil returned to Antioch, and here put the last polish to his preparatory studies under Libanius, with whom he entered into a close temporary intimacy and correspondence. Having made great proficiency as an orator, he practised at the Forum at Antioch with much success and applause. These objects soon losing their attraction, threw him back upon the study of the Holy Scriptures and the expositions of theologians, especially those of Origen, to which his mind and all his labours were thenceforth dedicated. Having made some sojourn at Antioch on this second visit, he proceeded on his further travels, and at Alexandria in Egypt, besides acquainting himself with the methods of study and instruction in vogue there, took that opportunity of holding frequent and close converse with the monks and hermits, so numerous in those parts, whose strict and ascetic mode of living became the object of his admiration and imitation. From this place he extended his visits to Syria and Mesopotamia, and at length fixed his abode for a considerable time at Cæsarea in Cappadocia,[1] whence, upon some disagreement with Eusebius, the bishop of that see, he retired to a sequestered place in the neighbourhood of Neocæsarea.

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[1] Basil had been a fellow-student at Athens with the Emperor Julian, and while he was at Cæsarea he is said to have received an invitation from that prince to visit him at court. The invitation was refused; and it would seem that some part of his works had been read by the Emperor with so strong a feeling of disapprobation, as to produce from him the following laconic censure: ’Ανέγνων, ἔγνων, κατέγνων. "What you have written, I have read, understood, and condemned." To which Basil sent the following retort: ’Ανέγνως, οὐκ ἔγνως, εἰ γὰρ ἔγνως, οὐκ ἂν κατέγνως. "You have read, but not understood; for, had you understood, you would not have condemned."

Finding but little repose at Neocæsarea, he sought tranquillity in the more recluse and mountainous regions of Pontus, where he invited Nazianzen to partake of his solitude—a request which was complied with, after some correspondence between them on which the genius of the respective writers has stamped its peculiarities. The stay of Basil in his retirement continued for a considerable time, during which he was greatly successful in drawing others to the same contemplative life, and in framing rules and directions for the furtherance and prosperity of monastic establishments. This disposal of his time and abilities was the subject of complaint and censure, which drew from him an apology, in the form of an epistle to the community of Cæsarea, to excuse and justify his seclusion, which was followed by addresses to the presbyters and clergy, wherein he avowed his wishes for the prevalence and increase of ascetic habits, and his zeal in forming men for the monastic life, which he thought it his glory to promote. Much importunity was employed to bring back this champion of the orthodox faith to Cæsarea, and to make up the breach which had happened between him and the then bishop of that see, that his argumentative powers and weight of character might be brought into conflict with the Arians and Sabellians, then greatly in the ascendant with the Emperor Valens. His return to Cæsarea, which took place about 365 A.D., was signalised by his successful efforts in the maintenance of orthodox doctrines; and in these labours he continued to exert himself, both as a preacher and a writer, for a few years, till, in the year 370, a way was made for him to the archiepiscopal chair by the death of Eusebius. In the government of the see of Cæsarea he manifested indefatigable zeal, reforming the morals of the clergy, and establishing a rigid discipline in the Churches, and, in an eminent manner, promoting and encouraging provision for the relief of the necessitous.

In this exalted station as Archbishop of Cæsarea, in Pontic Cappadocia, Basil was exposed to much harassing opposition, during which he was frequently brought into collision with the Emperor Valens, who made great attempts by force or persuasion to bend him to his Arian prejudices. In every struggle the correctness of principles and opinions was triumphantly manifested, nor did any of the early professors or defenders of the pure Gospel more consistently or strenuously maintain the integrity of his belief. To the threats and exhortations of Modestus the Prefect, engaged on the part of the Emperor to make him a convert to his Arian creed, his answers were such as became one whose allegiance to his God made every opposing consideration as dust in the balance. "What are the punishments you threaten?" said Basil. "Are they confiscation of goods, banishment, torments, or death? None of these can reach us; we need not fear confiscation who have nothing to lose save a few tattered garments and a few books; as for banishment, why should I regard it who am tied to no place, seeing the entire earth is the Lord's whose pilgrim and sojourner I am; my body will sink under torments, and as to death, it will only send me sooner to God, for whom I live, and to be with Him I am desirous to die." The magnanimity of the Bishop found something congenial in the mind of the Emperor, and his prejudices, which carried oppression and persecution through the rest of his dominions, were arrested and disarmed by the worth of this venerable man.

The reforms introduced into the churches of his diocese were of a nature to make the Archbishop of Cæsarea the object of much jealousy and resentment, and, as was but too natural in times so distracted by contending doctrines, to involve him in continual troubles. His care was diffused over all the Churches, not only of his own province, but of distant communions, and wherever heretical or loose opinions showed themselves in any of the Eastern Churches, his pen and tongue were ever active in letters and discourses to repel the aggression, and defend the faith. The good prelate, in conjunction with other dignitaries, invited the bishops of Italy and France to unite with them in their efforts to restore the doctrines of the Nicene Council to their due ascendency in the Eastern Churches, then agitated and harassed by the violence and persecution with which the Arian, now the dominant creed, was everywhere abusing its victories. The Churches of Jerusalem and Antioch were especially the scenes of the most outrageous proceedings. But all these appeals appear, by the correspondence of Basil with Nazianzen and others, to have entirely failed; and the enfeebled health of the Archbishop made him sigh for the solace of his retirement in the mountain solitudes of Neocæsarea, now often brought painfully to his recollections amidst the tumults and contentions with which he was surrounded.

Basil himself was the object of various imputations of error, to which his answers were not only satisfactory and complete as personal vindications, but comprised such expositions of doctrine on fundamental questions as were calculated greatly to promote the prevalence of sound divinity. Having been specially accused of neglecting in his prayers to ascribe the same glory to the Holy Ghost as to the Father and the Son, he defended himself both in his epistles and tracts with great power and effect, and to the energy to which his mind was awakened by these unjust attacks the Church is indebted for his discourses on the Divinity of the Third Hypostasis, which, in conjunction with the writings of Athanasius and Hilary, seem to have exhausted the capacity of man on that awful and unfathomable truth.

Having heard of the death of Athanasius, and the persecuting rage of the Arian faction in Alexandria by which it was succeeded, he wrote to the orthodox party in that city from his sick couch a consolatory letter in terms of great sympathy and commiseration, lamenting his inability to visit them in person; and being now confined by age and bodily infirmity, he passed his few remaining days in promoting the faith once delivered to the saints in letters and short expositions, till, worn out by abstinence and incessant labours, he tranquilly resigned his breath (A.D. 379), commending his spirit to his Creator and Redeemer.

The Church sustained a heavy loss in this renowned defender of her catholic creed. Few, if any, of the Fathers have left a higher claim to have their memories kept fresh on the bosoms of a Christian posterity. His attainments seem to have been greatly promoted by early domestic culture. It was his felicity to draw his first breath in an atmosphere of piety, while many of his contemporaries carried the marks of heathen training even in the exercise of their sacred offices. His heart and tongue and pen were alike the ministers of truth, and the spurious philosophy of the schools had infused into the elements of his learning no foreign admixtures. Yet, perhaps, there was too much of self in his self-denials, and not enough of Christ in his

Christianity. He had a righteousness of his own on which he seemed to build too much expectation; and, perhaps, had his looks been more directed to the Cross of Calvary, and less to his own crosses, in his struggles for the truth, monachism would have been less indebted to him for its lazy and lifeless institutions, and Christian society would have derived from his example somewhat more of that loveliness which the truth as it is in Jesus imparts and diffuses.

The character of Basil has not escaped the imputation of pride. The historian of 'The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire' has borrowed an intimation of Jerom to this effect, with, perhaps, a little too much of predisposition to adopt the censure. Thus, in adverting to the efforts used by Valens to compel Basil to desist from his opposition to the Arian heresy, after giving due praise to the firmness of his principles, as also to the unexpected mildness of the Emperor, he speaks of the "inflexible pride"[1] with which the Archbishop asserted the truth of his opinions and the dignity of his rank, as a consequence of which the importunity was withdrawn, and the prelate was left to the possession of his conscience and his see. The same historian, in another place, in adverting to the insult, as he terms it, which Gregory Nazianzen received from his friend on his appointment to the wretched bishopric of Sasima, represents the exaltation of Basil to the archiepiscopal throne of Cæsarea as discovering to the world, and perhaps to himself, the pride of his character. And, again, when treating of the monks and anchorites of Palestine, we have the following representation of the active influence of Basil in modelling the concerns of that sapless, austere, and unsound system: "The fame of Basil is immortal in the monastic history of the East. With a mind that had tasted the learning and eloquence of Athens, with an ambition scarcely to be satisfied by the archbishopric of Cæsarea, Basil retired to a savage solitude in Pontus, and deigned for a while to give laws to the spiritual colonies which he profusely scattered along the coast of the Black Sea."[2]

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[1] Basilius Cæsariensis Episcopus Cappadociæ clarus habetur . . . . . qui multa continentiæ et ingenii bona uno superbiæ malo perdidit." This irreverent passage, says the historian, is perfectly in the style and character of St. Jerom. It does not appear in Scaliger's edition of his 'Chronicle;' but Isaac Vossius found it in some old MSS., which had not been reformed by the monks.

[2] c. 37.

We cannot part with this eminent person without a tribute to his great attainments. His talents and accomplishments have been the theme of much admiration among his contemporaries, and with the most qualified appreciators of genius and taste in composition in all subsequent periods. The testimony of Gregory of Nazianzus, after putting something to the score of friendship, is entitled to great respect; who tells us he was accounted the ablest writer of his age, and that those were considered among the best scholars who best understood and digested his writings, which alone were sufficient to conduct those who consulted them into all the paths of profitable learning; and so high were his powers of reasoning, and so transcendant the merits of his style and composition in the opinion of Erasmus, that he did not hesitate to give him an equal title with Demosthenes to the praise of eloquence, and graceful, as well as forcible, expression. It was the fate of Basil, as of all the great writers of that early period, to be made responsible for much that was not his own; and to distinguish the spurious from the genuine productions which have passed under his name has been the laudable labour of many learned moderns. Upon the whole it may be said of Basil that, formed with the greatest and sublimest natural powers and energies, he was placed under such embarrassments by the crisis and position in which he was constrained to exert himself, that his substantial usefulness was sadly circumscribed; and it can hardly be maintained, that during the thirteen years which he passed in the wilds of Pontus, occupied in the propagation of ascetic principles, and the melancholy pride of monkish institutions, he was labouring for the good of mankind, or in the cause of a religion whose genuine effect is to mellow and modify the social affections, and, in the union of charity with duty, to carry out the purposes of divine benevolence.

The writings of Basil, which are still extant, consist of commentaries on various parts of the sacred Scriptures; controversies with the Arians; sermons; homilies; canonical tracts; and many practical treatises on the vices and pernicious habits which prevailed in his day. Against the errors of Eunomius he composed a treatise, of which Jerom expresses himself in terms of the highest admiration. His discourse on the Holy Spirit vindicates his orthodoxy with the utmost clearness of diction and power of argument. His encomiastic orations, in celebration of the courage and constancy of the martyrs, are among his most polished compositions, in which kind his letters also may be considered as very finished examples. They are among the most curious and interesting remains of the learning and genius of the age in which he lived, admirable for their style and matter, and peculiarly valuable as records of the transactions of his own life and times. As in the powers and elegancies of diction he had hardly a superior in the best æra of classic antiquity, so he had no rival in his own age except in the friend and companion of his life, Gregory of Nazianzus.

The parents of St. Basil had ten children, several of them of reputation for worth and piety—his eldest sister, Macrina, especially, whose piety and prudence have handed down her memorial; but Gregory, afterwards Bishop of Nyssa, attained an eminence not to be eclipsed by his brother of Cæsarea, or his illustrious friend and namesake of Nazianzus. His early proficiency lay chiefly in secular studies, and rhetoric was for some time his favourite pursuit; till the remonstrances of Nazianzen led him wholly to devote himself to theology, and especially the points of controversy on which the minds of Christians were in those days principally engaged. By a diligent course of study he rose to eminence among the champions of orthodoxy, and became distinguished as an able defender of the Nicene Creed. These qualifications procured him to be consecrated Bishop of Nyssa, a city in the borders of Cappadocia, in which capacity his vehement opposition to the Arians was the occasion of his deposition and banishment by the Emperor Valens, about the year 370. In this state of exile, in which he appears to have suffered great deprivations, he remained for seven or eight years, during which time his frequent correspondence with Gregory Nazianzen was his principal solace and support. After the death of Basil, the Bishop of Nyssa was, under the Emperor Theodosius, employed in the controversy with the Arians of the Eastern Churches.

He composed twelve books against Eunomius, who, after the death of the great Basil, had written a vindication of himself and his errors, and these treatises he seems to have brought with him to the Constantinopolitan Council, which was held in the year 381, and in which he performed a very conspicuous part, having been mainly consulted in the composition of the confession of faith, which, while it but little varied from the creed settled by the Nicene Fathers, introduced into it the supplemental exposition of the Deity and procession of the Holy Ghost. He seems to have reached a very advanced age, as, when Jerom composed his Catalogue of Ecclesiastical Writers in 392, he was yet alive, and was even present at a synod held at Constantinople two years after the last-mentioned date, and died in the year following that event. To this learned bishop belongs the praise of considerable ingenuity and research, as well as perseverance in the defence of the orthodox creed against the heretics of his time. Polemic treatises, orations, eulogies, homilies, and epistles, have entitled him to a name of no little account in the patristical list of our Catholic divines.

Gregory, surnamed Theologus, or the Divine, was born at Nazianzus in Cappadocia Propria, or Magna, (distinguished, by being so called, from Cappadocia Pontica, simply designated by the name of Pontus), the son of parents greatly venerated for their virtues. His father, sprung from heathen parents, abjured his errors, and was appointed the pastoral bishop of the Church at Nazianzus. The story of his mother's praying for a son, and vowing at the altar to dedicate him to the service of God, may or may not be true ; but that she took all a Christian mother's pains to prepare and qualify him to labour efficaciously in that holy cause is a fact which his own testimony has placed beyond a doubt. And here we cannot but remark how beneficial an industry Christian mothers put forth in those early days in training their children to wisdom and virtue.

After an infancy passed in studies and occupations far above his years, he entered upon his travels ; and having visited the resorts of studious men, and survived a perilous storm at sea, during which his fervent prayers were followed by an extraordinary deliverance, he arrived at Athens, where began the close and affectionate friendship between himself and Basil that led to their subsequent strenuous co-operation in the maintenance of truth against the numerous prevailing errors and heresies which cast such a cloud over the agitated period of the fourth century of the Christian æra. And at Athens also began Gregory's acquaintance with Julian, afterwards Emperor, from whose carriage and demeanour he predicted the character of his future career. After a considerable period passed in each other's society, Basil left his friend to sojourn some time longer at Athens, in compliance with the earnest entreaties of his fellow students and associates. His remaining time there was passed in the study of the Scriptures, till, in obedience to the wishes of his parents, he returned to Nazianzus, when he was ordained a presbyter of the Church there by his father, whom, for some time, he assisted in his episcopal charge. While so employed he was persuaded by Basil to come to him in the place which he had chosen for his retreat in Pontus, where they framed in conjunction those rules for the regulation of the monastic life and discipline which tended greatly to bring those barren institutions into general credit and adoption in Christian states.

After passing some time in this retirement and in these employments with his friend, his duty to his aged parent, who had need of his aid and support, brought him again to Nazianzus, where he found the Arian heresy rapidly extending its influence. All his exertions were called for to defend the Church against an error flowing into it with so full a tide that even his father appeared in danger of being carried away by its force. At the same time the Emperor Julian, having succeeded to the government of the Roman world, was commencing his indirect persecution of the Christians. Joined by Basil in this hour of extreme danger, his labours in defence of truth against these formidable assaults from without and within the Church were persevering and incessant. The exaltation of Basil to the archiepiscopal throne of Cæsarea, in Cappadocia, while it strengthened the hands of these Christian combatants, provoked the envy and malice of their opponents. By their efforts and success the Emperor Julian was incited to an hostility at once puerile in conception and nugatory in effect. One of his laws forbade the Christians to teach in their schools the learning of the Gentiles; grounding his expectation of success on two very questionable assumptions, that the learning of the heathens was fundamentally important to the influence and attractions of Christian doctrines, and that intellectual inquiry and the spirit of research could be forced into inaction or turned out of its course by the interdicts or interference of arbitrary power. It is said that this edict had the effect of inducing many eminent Christians to seek a compensation by multiplying and varying their means of spiritual entertainment, and working after the models of classic literature, without stepping beyond their proper boundary in the matter of their compositions. Thus Apollinaris senior and junior, father and son, employed themselves in the composition of a species of sacred classics in imitation of the pagan orators and poets, and are said to have well succeeded in their object. The father drew his subjects from the Old Testament, turning the Pentateuch into heroic verse, in imitation of Homer, and, according to Sozomen, the rest of the Old Testament history into tragedies and lyrics, in imitation of Euripides and Pindar. The son turned the Gospels and canonical Epistles into dialogues in imitation of Plato. And there is yet extant a Greek version of the Psalms bearing the name of Apollinaris. The tragedy of 'Christ's Suffering,' exhibited among the works of Gregory Nazianzen, has by some been ascribed to the elder Apollinaris. The younger Apollinaris, who for his eminent services was made Bishop of Laodicea, was a person of great and shining talents. None maintained the great truth of Christ's divinity against all the collective energy and ability of the Arians with more power and effect than this very able theologian, whom the Christian Church saw with bitter regret and disappointment turn aside from the path of sound doctrine to indulge in certain fanciful and profane opinions, which, under the sanction of his name, obtained but too much credit throughout the eastern provinces.

The opinions of Apollinaris are here called profane in reference to their consequences; for, according to him, our whole humanity was not assumed by the Saviour. It was the human body with a sentient soul only, the office of the rational soul being supplied by the divinity;[1] so that all the rational and free acts of our Blessed Lord were the dictates of His Divine Nature, and from this imperfect assumption of our humanity the work of the atonement was abridged in its compass and efficacy, or the Divine Nature of Christ so confused with His human nature as to be joined with it in the suffering of pain and death. The doctrine seemed to have been suggested by the Platonic doctrine of a twofold soul; it may be classed, therefore, among the many shades of error and aberration that the fascinations of that seductive repository of the greatest conceptions of mere human intelligence bequeathed to us by Plato, have introduced into a system in which the best contributions of uninspired wisdom can only serve to aid the delusions of error by a more specious imitation of truth. The great reputation of Apollinaris the younger, though it could not prevail to establish his opinions against the collective efforts of the most able theologians of the time, or to prevent them from being condemned by a synod at Alexandria in 362, and another at Rome in 373, made them, nevertheless, the source of many disturbing doctrines and sects (that of Eutyches among others) by the very endeavours used to rescue him from reproach by qualifying and explaining his theory and principles.[1]

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[1] As it was expressed in Greek, Christ was *ἔνσαρκος*, but not *ἐμψυχώμενος*.

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[1] The laws against the Apollinarians are extant in the 'Codex Theodos.' vol. VI. 144; and Dr. Walch, in his 'Historie der Ketzereyen,' vol. III. pp. 119–229, may be consulted with advantage, as also the 'Historia Hæresis Apollinaris,' by Basnage, republished by Jo. Voigt. 'Biblioth. Hæresiologica,' vol. I. Fascic 1, pp. 1–96.

Apollinaris was not the first to adopt the Theopaschitan heresy. It was condemned by the Council of Sirmium in 351, whereas Apollinaris began his heresy in 360. It has been imputed to several others before his time, as to Ursatius and Valens, and was, in truth, a branch of Arianism. Arius and Eunomius held that the Divinity of the only Begotten was created. Nor did this tenet of Arius escape the observation of Augustin, 'Lib. de Hæres.' c. 19. "In eo autem quod Christum sine anima carnem accepisse arbitrantur, Ariani minus noti sunt." He quotes for this Epiphanius. The difference is that Apollinaris primarily taught, Verbum sine anima corpus assumsisse; Arius and his followers secondarily. Apollinaris lowered the Divinity by considering it as taking the place of the human soul;—Arius, by considering the Divinity as created. Gregory Naz., 'Orat.' 46, says "he had a little book in his hands in which Apollinaris teaches, and endeavours to prove, that the only Begotten Son of God, the Judge of all men, the Author of life, the Extinguisher of death, suffered in His own proper Divinity—that, in the three days' death, the Divinity died with the body, and by the power of the Father was recalled to life."

The heretical opinions of the Arians and Eunomians, but especially the Apollinarians, between whom and the two former the difference was small, gave occasion to the insertion in the Creed of the descent into hell; which implicitly involved the doctrine of the compound humanity of Christ, His body and His rational soul separated by death; one resting in the grave, and the other departing to the invisible sojourn, which is expressed by the too equivocal name of hell, or hades.

The truth of our Saviour's descent into hell was never denied or questioned in the early Church. The Holy Scriptures clearly imply the doctrine; especially in the text of St. Peter, cited from the Psalmist, Acts ii. 27: "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt Thou suffer Thy Holy One to see corruption." On the strength of this text St. Augustin says, "None but an infidel will deny it." Quis ergo nisi infidelis negaverit fuisse apud inferos Christum? 'Ad Euod.' Epist. 99.

But what has brought this passage in the Creed into so much discussion has been the various senses and significations which have been given to it.

In the Articles of Religion propounded in the reign of Edward VI., the descent of our Saviour into hell was explained by reference to the going of His soul unto the spirits who were in prison or in hell, where He preached to them. But in the synod held ten years after, in the

The Emperor Julian perished by a wound received in a battle with the Persians in the year of the Christian æra, 363, after reigning sole emperor of the Roman world twenty months from the death of Constantius, in the thirty-second year of his age—a lamentable instance of the perverting effects of the Platonic philosophy, to which his attention was unhappily drawn by some of the chiefs of that sect at various resorts, but principally at Pergamos, where Ædesius, an aged Platonist, and his scholars taught in the schools. His death was soon followed by the celebrated oration of Gregory Nazianzen, in which he exposed, in terms of the strongest invective, the folly and vanity of his efforts to deprive the Christians of the benefits of general learning. He himself indeed about this time was living in retirement, estranged from all commerce with the ancient

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time of Elizabeth, when the Articles of our Church were re-framed and settled, the descent into hell was mentioned without any exposition or comment; for which the moderation of our Church has been much commended, it being judged inexpedient to impose upon its members any authoritative explanation of a point so intricate and obscure. And it must be owned that the Fathers and primitive writers were very discordant and indistinct in their notions and apprehensions of this article. Cyprian, Hilary, and Tertullian place both Lazarus and Dives in this sojourn of separated souls, but in very different allotments, the one being in a place of solace and refreshment, descriptively named the bosom of Abraham, the other in a situation of sorrow, suffering, and remorse.

The affirmation in the Apostles' Creed, that "Christ descended into hell," is in direct opposition to the Apollinarian assumption of our Saviour's being without a rational soul. It could not be His Deity that descended into hades or hell," for that was always omnipresent, and therefore could not make a local transition thither, neither could it be His body, for that was committed to the grave. It must, therefore, be His soul, His human rational soul.

The Apollinarians, in maintaining their hypothesis of the sensitive soul of the Saviour, have been pressed with two arguments, against which they have very feebly sustained themselves. When the orthodox in support of their doctrine have produced the text of John, x. 18, "No man taketh away my life [τὴν ψυχήν μου, i.e. my soul] from me, but I lay it down myself;" they reply, that hereby He meant the human life, which is answered by the sensitive soul, like that of brutes; or, if the orthodox again argue from Christ's being sorrowful and exceeding heavy, that He must needs have had a reasonable soul, seeing that His Divinity and also His material body must have been incapable of sorrow, they rejoin that it might be well enough understood of the body, that that was perceptive and sensible of suffering, as in the case of brutes. Think, reader, of the sorrow felt in the Garden of Gethsemane, and say if it could be the brutish shrinking from pain. Let us rather hold, with Clemens Romanus, that Christ gave His flesh for our flesh, His soul for our souls (Epist. 1, 49); and with Damasus, Bishop of Rome, in his synodical epistle, "That Christ the Son of God, by His passion wrought such full salvation for mankind, that He freed the *whole* man, entangled by sin, from all iniquity." The Fathers of the gravest authority are unanimous on this solemn point. Origen, Athanasius, Epiphanius, Ambrose, and especially Athanasius 'De Incarn. Christi. Adv. Apollin.' 630.

classics, and devoted wholly to the study of Divine Truth. He was forced, however, from his retirement, as before observed, to assist his aged father at Nazianzus, where he laboured with great assiduity in discharging all the offices of the sacred ministry; till an interruption of this course of usefulness was occasioned by the following incident.

The Emperor Valens, having divided Cappadocia into two provinces, made Tyana the metropolis of that which was to be in future distinguished by the name of the second Cappadocia, and Anthimus, bishop of that place, claimed the government of the Churches within that province, which had till then been subject to Basil, as Archbishop of Cæsarea. Displeased at this limitation of his jurisdiction, Basil erected new bishoprics, and among others, Sasima, a small town on the border of his province, was raised to that dignity, and Gregory was desired to accept of the charge of this insignificant see. It is of this appointment that the historian of the Decline and Fall speaks in the severe though not wholly unwarranted terms before referred to. "This first favour," says he, "which Basil condescended to bestow on his friend was received, and perhaps was intended, as a cruel insult. Instead of employing the superior talents of Gregory in some useful and conspicuous station, the haughty prelate selected, among the fifty bishoprics of his extensive province, the wretched village of Sasima, without water, without verdure, without society, situate at the junction of three highways, and frequented only by the incessant passage of rude and clamourous waggoners." Gregory submitted, and was ordained Bishop of Sasima, but never entered upon his episcopal functions. He seems to have been sorely distressed by this instance of unkindness in a friend to whom he had been so affectionately attached for so long a course of years. He did not dissemble his indignation, but poured forth his sorrow and disappointment in a poem in which the event is lamented in very affecting terms.[1]

His brother Cæsarius, and his sister Gorgonia, are pleasing accompaniments in the narrative of this illustrious Father's life, and fill out the portraiture of his amiable character in its complete proportions. Cæsarius was a man of learning, and by profession a physician, which capacity was coupled with that of treasurer. He was in high favour at the court of Julian, who used all the means in his power to bring him over to paganism. The pains taken by Gregory to rescue his brother from the dangers surrounding him were incessant, and at length availing. But again under the reign of Valens, before that Emperor had adopted the Arian heresy, he sought and obtained preferment. A terrible earthquake happened in Bithynia while he was there in the employment of the government, and it appears that his preservation from the surrounding destruction was so peculiar as to dispose him to serious reflections, so that his brother Gregory had no difficulty in persuading him to return home and to devote himself to a religious life. He soon after sank under the attacks of a severe disease, and left a memory honoured by the tears of the virtuous, and embalmed in the eloquence of his affectionate brother.

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[1] . . . . . πόνοι κοινοὶ λόγων,
Ὁμόστεγος τε καὶ συνέστιος βίος,
Νοῦς εἷς ἐν ἀμφοῖν . . . . .
Διασκεδάσται πάντα, ἔῤῥιπται χαμαὶ,
Αὗραι φέρουσι τὰς παλαιὰς ἐλπίδας.

The death of his sister Gorgonia followed soon after, which again gave a melancholy employment to his pen in an affecting tribute to her character, which he has perpetuated in a portraiture of great feminine and moral excellence. She appears to have been most exemplary as a wife and mother, having been married to a person of opulence, by whom she had several children. Perhaps there is hardly upon record a more lovely pattern of female worth. Her charity to the wants of the necessitous, and her prudence in the management of her domestic affairs, were not less remarkable than the modesty and propriety of her deportment in her general intercourse; and all her excellences were crowned by a fervid piety, which could not be satisfied without whole nights spent in prayer and Divine meditations.

Next followed the death of Gregory's ancient father, after having occupied the see of Nazianzus forty-five years, and having fulfilled a destiny of nearly one hundred years upon earth. His life was a series of holy actions mixed with great and continual corporal pains, which were observed in a marvellous manner to be suspended by the fervency of his frequent devotional exercises. In his son's funeral oration the character of this eminent Christian is arrayed in all the graces which filial homage, with the noblest eloquence at its command, could bestow. In the press of prominent men who challenge our notice in the stirring period of the fourth century of the Christian æra, the sober lustre of the Bishop of Nazianzus has scarcely preserved his name from oblivion ; but as he was not one whose memorial we could choose should have perished with him, so neither without sorrow can we see the neglect into which those pages have fallen, wherein one of the best of sons has given to one of the best of fathers the meed of a disinterested and unsuborned eulogium, in which duty found it difficult to keep pace with desert. The model is well worthy of the study of those who in similar stations await their account with an adequate sense of their duties.

These family funerals had but little pause. Nonna, the mother of Nazianzen, next yielded her breath at an age little behind that of her venerable consort. Her memory shared with that of the father the piety of filial eloquence. Having proclaimed her merits as a wife and a mother, the same tender memorial records, "that the bravery which other women admired was undervalued by her, who accounted the Divine image the truest beauty, and virtue the highest nobility. She was of an equable temper, and under all calamities gave glory to God, with a heart overflowing with compassion for the distresses of others.

Sorrows so quick in succession sent Nazianzen again to his retirement, and after a short secession the death of St. Basil completed the sad list of his bereavements. The illness of Gregory at that affecting juncture prevented his attendance upon his dying friend, but his beautiful encomium has embalmed his memory, and given it an eternity among the monuments of those whose records preach to us from their consecrated graves. Gregory was yet in the possession of all his capacities for the common good. His presence was first required at Antioch to heal the divisions of the Church there; but the state of the imperial city, with a call of still greater urgency, summoned him to join and direct the proceedings of those who were, with great difficulty, maintaining the Catholic faith against the Arians and Apollinarians. The multitude were incited to great violence by those opposers of the truth, and the lives of Gregory and his friends were put in some jeopardy for a considerable period.

The interest here excited by the eloquent lectures and sermons of Gregory was greatly increased by the ill-treatment which he was thus made to experience. From distant provinces distinguished scholars repaired to Constantinople to be benefited by his instructions. Among others Jerom, who had resided some time in Syria, and had been ordained Presbyter by Paulinus of Antioch, became one of his auditors, and often reverted to it as a glorious incident of his life. Gregory's arrival in Constantinople took place about the year 378, from which time, till his instalment into the see of that great metropolis, he made it his place of residence. And here he maintained his combat with the Arians, Apollinarians, and other heretics, of which Constantinople was at this time the principal theatre. Damophilus, an Arian in his faith, was at this time the Bishop of Constantinople, so that the congregations who were assembled in order to be delighted and edified by the eloquence of Gregory, were entertained in the house of a pious citizen, who dedicated a large room to that purpose, to which was given the name of Anastasia, as indicating the resurrection of the true faith. From this pulpit Nazianzen continued for the space of two years to gather fame and converts, while the rage of a discomfited faction mustered against him a physical force so violent and tumultuous as to give him perpetual disturbance, and sometimes to put his life in imminent peril. The doors of his little sanctuary were on some occasions broken open, and the sacred purposes of the meeting were profaned and outraged.

On the 26th day of November, in the year 380 A.D., the Emperor Theodosius made his entry into Constantinople to celebrate his victories, and to receive the gratulations of the Church on his recent baptism. Damophilus was removed from the possession of the see, and not without a great display of military force, to overawe the multitude, which was vehement on the side of the Arian bishop. Gregory was conducted in triumph to the seat of the archiepiscopacy, where he was installed in the ecclesiastical government of the imperial city, and the religion of the Emperor was soon after established in the greater number of the Eastern Churches. In this state of things, Theodosius summoned the bishops of the East to a council at Constantinople, where they accordingly met to the number of one hundred and fifty of those denominated Catholics, and about thirty-six of the party of the Macedonians. None but the Eastern bishops were in attendance. It was, however, always acknowledged as a general council.

After settling the controversy between Gregory and Maximus, his adversary and competitor, and establishing the former in the archiepiscopal chair, much against his will, it being, as is testified on good authority, his earnest desire to promote by his abdication the peace of the Church, the Assembly proceeded to the consideration of the great subjects for which it was convened.

The Nicene Confession was confirmed as far as it had gone; but as the Council was especially called to meet the errors introduced by the Macedonians, an explication was added of the doctrine relating to the Third Person of the Trinity. To this Council is to be ascribed the addition thus solemnly expressed: "We believe in the Holy Ghost," &c., to the end of what is usually called the Nicene, but is more properly the Constantinopolitan creed, wanting only, what has since been added, the procession of the Holy Ghost from the Father and the Son, or, as it was called, the Filioque. When this last-mentioned addition was made seems not to be with certainty known, but the period to which it is with most probability assigned is about the middle of the ninth century.

The Council of Constantinople was one of immense importance, for in it were specially condemned the Sabellian, the Marcellian, the Photinian, the Eunomian, the Apollinarian, and the Macedonian heresies. The errors introduced by Sabellius, a Libyan bishop of Ptolemais, in Pentapolis, a province of Libya Cyrenaica, whose heresy was begun in the middle of the foregoing century, have been treated of in an earlier part of this work. But to place before the reader in a few words the sum of the Sabellian doctrines, we may add here that by confounding the Persons of the Trinity, and resolving them into mere operations of the one Essence, the very fundamentals of Christianity were thrown into disorder, and a ground laid for the Patropassian and other heresies of an equally pernicious character. The reception by the Sabellians of apocryphal writings, and especially of a book called the Egyptian Gospel, in which our Saviour is introduced instructing His Apostles that the Father and the Son are but one and the same Person, served fatally to confirm them in their dangerous errors.

The heresy of Marcellus fell next under the condemnation of this important Council. He was a bishop of Ancyra in Galatia, whose prime error it was to assert that Christ began to be the Son of God on His coming in the flesh, and that His kingdom shall continue to the day of judgment, and then cease, and the Word being reabsorbed in the Father shall have no more a distinct personal subsistence; to meet which heretical assumption the words, "of whose Kingdom there shall be no end," were added to the Creed by the Constantinopolitan Fathers.

Photinus was the promoter of heresies so revolting as to be condemned equally by the Catholics and Arians. He scrupled not, as far as in him lay, to reanimate the carcase of the heresy of Paul of Samosata, denying our Lord's eternal essentiality, His Divinity and His pre-existence. A delusion of a similar cast was first set on foot by Aëtius, afterwards a Presbyter of Antioch, who was strenuous in maintaining that the Son of God was ὁμοιούσιος, i. e. of like essence with the Father, and that not by nature, but by grace. He was deposed, and banished in the reign of Constantius, and recalled by Julian, by whom he was made a bishop. But a worse eminence distinguished his scholar Eunomius, born at Dacora, a small village near Cæsarea in Cappadocia, who, after being banished with Aëtius, was also recalled, and made Bishop of Cyzicum.[1]

The master and scholar, by their active co-operation, succeeded in deepening the shades of the Arian apostasy, and became at length, in the progress of error, the leader of that party of the Arians who were called Anomæans, or Heterousians, by whom an essence was ascribed to the Saviour altogether different from that of the Father. Of the Apollinarians we have said enough; and they need only be mentioned here as a sect whose heresy was especially condemned by the Council of Constantinople.

But that corruption in doctrine which was the chief cause of the convention of the general Council of Constantinople, under the Emperor Theodosius, during the short archiepiscopacy of Gregory, was introduced by Macedonius. The Divinity of Christ had been stated sufficiently in the Nicene Creed, but no question had been stirred respecting the Deity of the Holy Spirit till the Arian heresy came to put forth its luxuriant branches, and one of the parties into which it was divided had the hardihood to dismember the Trinity itself by disuniting from its Essence the Third constituent Person. The assertion of the holy doctrine of the Triune Godhead, of which the Deity of the Holy Ghost was an essential part, was therefore wanting in the Nicene, and supplied by the Confession of the Constantinopolitan Council. The great patron and promoter of this error was Macedonius, who had been a deacon under Alexander, Bishop of Byzantium, and who was afterwards made bishop of the same city by the Arian faction, in opposition to Paul, of the orthodox party, on the death of Alexander. He had set out on his heretical career with the extreme Arians, but, after a time, adopted the opinions of the more moderate of that party, asserting the Son to be of a like Essence with the Father, but still affirming the Holy Ghost to be a mere minister, a little above the angelic host. In the article of Christ's Divinity he retreated so far from the most corrupt among the Arians, that Gregory Nazianzen seemed to think him not in error concerning this great truth. Still, however, he entirely rejected, as did all his followers, the word Homo-ousios, or consubstantial; while the canons of this Council stigmatised them by the name of Pneumatomachi, as undeifying by their tenets the awful character of the Holy Ghost, who was viewed by them as external to the one indivisible Godhead. The Creed, therefore, which was established at this Council confessed, in terms, the unity of the Holy Ghost with the Father and the Son. He is also thereby declared to be "the Lord," or Sovereign Spirit, in opposition to the heretical doctrine which made Him a minister only, and the Supreme "Giver of Life," in answer to those who considered Him as the instrumental communicator of spiritual life and light. To this second general Council held at Constantinople the Macedonian bishops were invited by Theodosius, in the hope of inducing them to renounce their errors; and thirty-six of these bishops were accordingly present, and some efforts were used to bring them over; but they were not to be reconciled to the Nicene faith; and they thus fell under the decided condemnation of the Council.

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[1] [He is said to have represented Christ as nothing more than the first and principal creature of the Father, and the Holy Ghost as made by the Son before His other works were wrought, void therefore of divinity and creating power. Consistently with the doctrine he maintained, he is stated to have baptized by a single immersion, not into the name of the Trinity, but simply into the death of Christ; and he is further represented as a derider of the doctrine of future punishments.—Ed.]

This Council had several sessions, in which they put forth several distinct decrees, by the first of which, while Meletius, Bishop of Antioch, was living, and presided in the assembly, they established Gregory Nazianzen in the see of Constantinople, excluding the pretensions of Maximus. Before the end of this synod Meletius died, whereby Gregory lost an availing and essential support. The second decree of this Council confined the bishops to their provinces; and the third gave to the Bishop of Constantinople the rank of Second Patriarch—an elevation which was afterwards by the Council of Chalcedon advanced to an equality with the Roman Episcopacy.

After the removal by death of Meletius of Antioch, the bishops of the East became too strong for Nazianzen, on the invalidity of whose appointment by translation to the see of Constantinople they insisted with great earnestness and perseverance. Determined as much by his own bias towards retirement, as by the aggressive spirit of this confederacy against him, Gregory at once resolved to abdicate all his ecclesiastical honours, and to withdraw himself from the world and its contentions. His speeches upon this occasion, and especially his farewell address to the Roman Emperor, are full of Christian pathos and spiritual humility.

The flock who had been nurtured under his pastoral care, and had been kept from aberration by his watchful superintendence, in vain gathered round him to shake his purpose or delay his departure. They could only obtain from him expressions of the deepest sorrow for the multiplied heresies by which the edifice of Christian faith was shaken to its foundation, and the bitter animosities to which a religion of peace had been abandoned. He lamented, in a strain of tender indignation, that reverend prelates should be at war with each other, and that those whose office it was to diffuse the blessings of unity should be the fomenters of mutual hostility. While he deplored this state of things, he declared his readiness to sacrifice all personal considerations; and, though he was guiltless of the storm which had been raised, he was willing, like Jonah, to be cast into the sea, so that the tempest might be calmed and the vessel preserved. In a speech before the hundred and fifty Fathers of the Council, he took an affecting leave of the assembled Church and the contentious world. The scene displayed in the great temple of the imperial city was striking and impressive. The pomp of the spectacle was swelled by the crowd which thronged to hear the farewell oration pronounced, with all the grace of parting solemnity, from lips which held at their command all the ornaments of eloquence and the varied resources of Grecian literature. After expressing his earnest wish to be eased of his burthen, and that, in consideration of his gray hairs and infirmities, his room might be filled by one of more strength and activity, he begged to be dismissed with their prayers, and with the comforting acknowledgment of their good acceptance of his labours, and thus apostrophised the place where his exertions had been so laudably put forth for the revival of truth and orthodoxy :—" Farewell, Anastasia,[1] in whom the true faith has had a resurrection after its being long buried in reproach and contempt! Farewell thou great and magnificent temple, whom of a Jebus we made a Jerusalem !" Thus having taken leave of the bishops and apostrophised the Church, turning to the people he thus concluded :—" Little children, keep that which I have committed to you, and remember my sufferings. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."

Thus, after a continuance of three years in Constantinople, and one year's possession of the episcopal throne, Gregory Nazianzen withdrew himself from a scene of care and turbulence, in which his efforts in the promotion of general peace had resulted in much disappointment, though doubtless in an eminent degree successful in combating and exposing the various heresies which in his time had corrupted the faith, and sought the sequestration of his native country and paternal estate. His successor was Nectarius, a man of a reverend age, and in much esteem, but a layman, and as yet unbaptized, yet so acceptable to the Emperor Theodosius, that although but a very few votes could be obtained for him in the Council, the imperial choice determined his appointment, which was followed by his baptism and ordination.

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[1] Again, in his poem addressed to himself, *εἰς ἑαυτὸν μετὰ τὴν ἀπὸ τῆς Κωνσταντίνου πόλεως ἐπάνοδον*, he apostrophises his dear Anastasia :

*Κλεινὸν Ἀναστασίης χαίροις ἕδος, ἣ ῥα θάνουσιν*
*Πίστιν ἔθηκας ἄνω αὖθις ἐμοῖσι λόγοις,*
*Σεῖο μὲν οὐδὲ θανὼν ἐπιλήσομαι . . . . .*

At Nazianzus, in a sequestered spot, Gregory found the retreat he was in quest of, his own by inheritance, where he composed his celebrated oration on the merits of his departed friend, the great Basil, and several poems, which seemed to solace the last stage of his eventful life; and in this repose he departed out of life in the year A.D. 389.

Of the early editions of the works of Gregory Nazianzen that of Billius appears to have been the most esteemed, in two volumes folio. They consist of about fifty orations or sermons, some poems, and upwards of two hundred and forty epistles. Many epigrams, or short poems, ascribed to Gregory have been published by Muratori. His orations partly consisted of confutations of the heresies of the Arians, or of those who borrowed from them or aggravated their errors, and partly of eulogies on his friends or monastic recluses. He has left us also a few discourses on practical subjects. Of his poems, as specimens of his genius, we cannot speak in the language of admiration. They are very defective in the nerve, simplicity, and grace, without which poetry sinks below prose; and yet it cannot be said that they are without pathos or imagination. Two or three of these poems are addressed to himself, and reflect his own experiences and impressions with a pleasing fidelity.[1] His orations are characterised by spurious ornament, though composed in general with brilliance of language and a vivid force of expression. After completing his studies at Athens, the most vigorous period of his life, from 355 to 361, was passed in studious and elegant retirement, during which interval he may be supposed to have laid up that knowledge and matured those powers which qualified him for taking the field against all the enemies of the Catholic faith. From 361 to the death of his father, in 374, his life was public, and engaged in the services of the Church; then again he sequestered himself from general commerce, till his coming to Constantinople in 379. There his concluding destiny exhibited him first in the chair of theology, and afterwards on the archiepiscopal throne, soon to descend from thence into the vale of solitude, and to pass his remaining days in the company of his own thoughts, which not unfrequently found their entertainment and solace in the exercises of religious poetry.

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[1] His *στίχοι ἡμιΐαμβοι εἰς τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ψυχὴν* are very lively and vigorous; and his verses *εἰς 'Επισκόπους* are well worthy of perusal, as containing a sad picture of the state of the Church as affected by the character and habits of those by whom it was governed, and its rites and offices administered, in the fourth century; a period in which some of our modern theologians consider Christianity to have been displayed in its greatest beauty.

His discourses on practical subjects contain many detached sentiments of great worth and solidity; but of none of this writer's productions in illustration of moral precepts and verities, nor perhaps of any of the ethical lucubrations of the Fathers of the fourth century, can it be affirmed that they furnish much authentic or effectual aid towards the discharge of our domestic duties, or the various vocations of active life. For the right apprehension of moral duties the early Christian writers were apt to content themselves with the cold term philosophise (φιλοσοφέω). Gregory uses it in apologising to Basil for not returning to Pontus, being detained by the duty of attending upon his aged parents. "Do you take it amiss that I am acting the part of a philosopher?" Ὅτι φιλοσοφοῦμεν ἀγανακτεῖς; To give this force to the term philosophising was in the spirit of those principles which entered into the Christianity of very many of the most learned professors and teachers of the fourth century. Of the writings of Basil, Gregory of Nyssa, Chrysostom, Ambrose, and Augustin upon moral subjects, Mosheim gives the following opinion: "They are neither worthy of high encomiums, nor of entire contempt, as they contain a strange mixture of excellent reflections, and insipid details, concerning the duties of the Christian life." "They neglect deducing the duties of mankind from their true principles, and even sometimes derive them from doctrines and precepts, either manifestly false, or whose nature and meaning are not determined with any degree of accuracy." This censure to some may seem somewhat overcharged; but few who are acquainted with the theology of the fourth century can help seeing that it was greatly adulterated, and that the philosophy of the Alexandrian schools sent forth a multitude of amphibious disciples of Christ and of Plato, and gave existence to a double doctrine of morals, compounded of two systems, divine and human, to the great injury of true religion.

In the works of Gregory some passages are found which are of a highly exceptionable character. Thus in his funeral oration in honour of Basil, he migrates not a little from the written word in the following strain:—"Now, indeed, he is in heaven, and is there offering up, as I think, sacrifices for us, and praying for the people."[1] And a little after occurs the following statement:—"From whom I am even now receiving counsel, and am corrected in nightly visions, if at any time I fall from my duty." It would, however, be doing great injustice to this eminent Father, not fully to admit his claims to our admiration and gratitude for the eloquence and piety diffused over all the productions of his pen, and his great service to the cause of truth and orthodoxy. His religion was of an ascetic character. Watchings and fastings, with the bare ground for his bed, seemed to hold too high a rank among Christian duties in the mind of Gregory. They were the outward practices of an age in which specious claims to meritorious self-denial had little or no effect in chastening or controlling the vices and corruptions which, by the testimony and confession of the gravest writers of that epoch, had become notoriously prevalent even among the ecclesiastics of the fourth century. This decay of true religion may in some measure account for the tendency to multiply miracles and tales of wonder to keep up the credit and influence of a priesthood who, in proportion as they sunk in moral estimation, were induced to avail themselves of the support of superstition.

Thus, although the sanctity of the character of Gregory Nazianzen acquired for him the surname of Theologus, his theology was not in all respects above comment, but contained the germs of antichristian error and delusion. In some of his encomiastical orations he addresses departed saints; and especially in his eulogy on St. Cyprian, he makes him introduce Justina entreating the help of the Virgin Mary, and concludes with a supplication to that saint and martyr to aid him in governing his flock.[2] Upon the whole he was an excellent person, greatly to be admired, but not always to be followed; full of genius, and rich in moral qualities; amicable, charitable, bountiful, unambitious, and disdainful of pomp and the distinctions of wealth and rank; nor can it be denied that, both by his example and his writings, he did well entitle himself to the dignity of a Father of the Church and the homage of a grateful posterity. Simeon Metaphrastes, a writer of the tenth century, has given us a draft of his person. It was, as it seems, of the middle size, with a very amicable expression; a head rather bald, arched eyebrows, and with an appearance of heaviness in his right eye, arising from a slight damage.

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[1] *Καὶ νῦν ὁ μέν ἐστιν ἐν οὐρανοῖς, κἀκεῖ τὰς ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν, ὡς οἶμαι, πρασφέρων θυσίας καὶ τὸν λαὸν προσευχόμενός.*—Fun. Or. on Basil, Orat. xx. 372.

[2] We often hear of the integrity of the worship and faith of this period of the Church. The truth is, if the scholars of a modern school of divinity will forgive a remark so little in accordance with their homage of the fourth century, there has hardly any flagrant error been obtruded upon us in ecclesiastical history, the germ or roots of which may not be clearly discerned in that century. The worship of the Virgin Mary, if the passage alluded to in the text be taken in its proper scope and significance, was agreeable to the religious opinions of Gregory, and his supplication to the saint and martyr, who was the subject of his eulogy, to assist him in his episcopal and ministerial duties, forbids us to doubt that hagiolatry was a part of his system of worship. I know that there is always at hand some apology for these obnoxious passages where there is a strong repug-

We shall bestow but a few remarks on the character and

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nance to acquiesce in the inferences which they naturally suggest. It is observed by the editor of the works of Sulpicius Severus, in a note to his second epistle to Aurelius the deacon against those who were enviers of the virtues of his venerated Bishop of Tours, that Basil, Nazianzen, and other Fathers, after the fashion of orators, and per προσωποποίαν, addressed saints as being present; but he is still compelled to admit that from this practice was afterwards introduced the invocation of saints. He says it was "oratorio more," but adds, "unde sanctorum invocatio postea fluxit." In the same note we find an extraordinary passage quoted from Maximus Taurinensis, an elegant writer of the period under consideration, alleging that all the saints are everywhere present as the dispensers of benefits; that they always abide with us to protect us while we are living in the body, and receive our departing spirits. Vigilantius brought upon himself all the indignation of Jerom by denying that the martyrs could be present at their sepulchres, or where they pleased. And this dangerous doctrine is carried by Sulpicius Severus in his eulogy of Martin to the following extent. He says, after lamenting the heavy burden of his own sins, "There is a hope, however, left, our sole and last hope, that what we cannot obtain of ourselves, we may at least merit by Martin's intercession.". Paulinus of Nola is equally exceptionable in his doctrine on this point.

"Exora ut precibus plenis meritisque redonet
Debita nostra tuis."
'In Natali Felicis,' III.

"Inter me et Dominum mediator adesto benigne."
'In Vita Mart.' lib. II.

Prudentius, the celebrated Christian poet of this age, and who may be considered as expressing the opinions current in his times, after celebrating the martyrdom of Laurentius, thus addresses him:—

"Indignus agnosco et scio
Quem Christus ipse exaudiat,
Sed per patronos martyres
Potest medelam consequi.
Audi benignus, supplicem
Christi reum Prudentium,
Et servientem corpori
Absolve vinclis sæculi."
'Peri. Steph.' Hymn II.

And, in terms still more gross and extravagant, he thus addresses St. Agnes:—

"O virgo felix! O nova gloria!
Cælestis arcis nobilis incola!
Intende nostris colluvionibus
Vultum gemello cum diademate:
Cui posse soli Cunctiparens dedit
Castum vel ipsum reddere fornicem.
Purgabor oris propitiabilis
Fulgore, nostrum si jecur impleas.
Nil non pudicum est quod pia visere
Dignaris, almo vel pede tangere."

Other instances might readily be given, enough to prove the sad unsoundness of opinion prevalent in the fourth and fifth centuries.

history of Epiphanius. He was born in a village near Eleutheropolis. The particulars of his life are given us by one of his scholars, by whom we are told that his parents were Jews; that his father was a husbandman, and his mother a manufacturer of linen; that his father died when he was only ten years of age; that, as he left his family very poor, Epiphanius was adopted by a rich lawyer, who educated him liberally, after the Jewish model; that, as his only daughter, whom he had designed for him in marriage, died before that intention was accomplished, the father, whose death soon after followed, left him the sole inheritor of his large possessions; that his own mother being dead, leaving only two children—himself and a sister named Callitropes, he lived some time with her in affluence and contentment; that his conversion from Judaism to Christianity in 332 was the work of a monk of the name of Lucian, whom he met with on his way to the place of his birth. This monk, it appears, instructed him in the doctrines of Christianity, and baptized him; whereupon he sold his estate, and, bestowing the produce upon the poor, entered upon a life of solitude. The veracity of this biographer has, however, been much suspected, having no credible confirmation, and may be regarded as hardly worthy of historical mention. If he lived to the age of ninety, as is said, and died in 403 A.D., we must give to his birth the date of 313. We trace him, with pretty good certainty, to the city and schools of Alexandria. Here his danger of being seduced into many pernicious errors by the Gnostics is related by himself. He was providentially delivered from these snares; and, having returned into his own country, he became a disciple of Hilarion, a great promoter of the monastic life and discipline in Palestine.

The lessons of Hilarion, who had been the disciple of St. Anthony, bred in him a zeal for encouraging a devout separation from the world; and, after some residence in Palestine, he founded a monastery near Bezanducan, the place of his birth, over which he presided during many years, and never abandoned the charge and protection of this his favourite sojourn. Under the reign of the Emperor Valens he was advanced to the bishopric of Salamin, in Cyprus, which was in the year 367. There he was greatly honoured and revered; and was in such high esteem for his wisdom and piety, that distant Churches had recourse to his judgment and orthodoxy for the decision of their controversies; particularly, as it appears, the presbyters of Suedra, in Pamphylia, where the Macedonian heresy, though declining in influence, still prevailed. The reference to him on this subject drew from him an answer, in which he expounded the doctrine concerning the Persons of the blessed Trinity according to Scripture. To this treatise he gave the title of Ancoratus, Ἀγκυρώτον, as being an anchor to fix and secure the mind against the subtle endeavours of the various heretics to unsettle and distract the Christian inquirer.

In his 'Anchorat' he introduced a list of prevailing heresies; but in a larger work, compiled soon afterwards, he produced a general historical account of heresies, brought down to his own time, confuting the errors of each as they are severally set forth; and to this tract he gave the name of 'Panarion,' being intended as a repository of antidotes to defeat their poisonous tendencies; and from this larger work he constructed a compendium, which he styled 'Anacephalæosis.' Both these works are extant.

In the year A.D. 386 John succeeded Cyril in the see of Jerusalem, whither Epiphanius, who continued in frequent communication with the monastery which he had founded in Palestine, often repaired. In these visits he fell into a sore controversy with the bishop, who was but too well affected towards the Arian and Macedonian heresies, and gave open countenance to some of the leading opinions of Origen. The active interference of Epiphanius at Jerusalem to stop the progress of errors, brought upon him the angry censures of this unsound bishop, and involved him in a contention which made his remaining years a protracted season of anxious disquietude.

Whenever a good purpose is characterised by excess in its working and extravagance in its aims, it is apt to accept the cooperation of illegitimate aids, and to make use of an instrumentality which impedes rather than promotes its success.

It was so with the extreme hostility of Epiphanius to the doctrines of Origen. Among those idle and profane disputations which are the corrupt brood of ignorance and indolence, whether God was a purely spiritual Essence, or a corporeal Being having the parts and figure of a man, was at this time a question, the opposite sides of which divided the monks of Egypt, and especially of Nitria, into two factions, actuated by the bitterest enmity towards each other. Those whose conceptions of the Deity were borrowed from the senses, and the impressions of our material experience, commenced a vehement attack upon the writings of Origen, which were all on the side of that holy conception of the True and Living God, which, in the language of our first Article, presents Him to our adoring imagination as "without body, parts, or passions;" while the opposing party as strenuously devoted themselves to the views and opinions of Origen, and stigmatised those of the contrary opinion with the name of Anthropomorphites. Theophilus, the Bishop of Alexandria, at first declared his decided adherence to the purer and holier sentiment; but he was an untrue and unstable man. Being carried away by his antipathy to Origen, he lent too favourable an ear to the numerous party of the monks, who entertained the above-mentioned corporeal views of the infinite Jehovah, and succeeded in an attempt to make their common hatred of the writings and memory of Origen the ground of a co-operation, in which the zeal of the Anthropomorphites was allowed to participate, and Epiphanius was brought under suspicion of a degrading alliance with them. With Theophilus, and all the more furious enemies of the writings and character of Origen, Epiphanius became zealously associated, to the strength of which party Jerom furnished no small accession, from the irritability and energy of his powers and learning. The ordination of Paulinianus, Jerom's younger brother, by Epiphanius, as a presbyter in the church adjoining his monastery, inflamed his quarrel with John, the Bishop of Jerusalem, who exclaimed against the act as being done by a bishop out of his own diocese, in breach of the canons of the Church, and by which he incurred the penalty of deposition from his office; and thus the contention on the subjects in dispute was carried to a height that involved the Church in a most unseemly and disreputable discord, a state of warfare which was greatly aggravated by the indecent violence of the monks on either side.

The earnestness and resolution of Epiphanius were not to be subdued by any opposition. It was remarkably instanced by his summary interference in correcting what struck him as grossly amiss in one of the churches within the diocese of John, and which brought upon him the charge of spoliation and sacrilege.

In a village called Anablatha, near Bethel, he perceived the image of Christ, or some saint, on one of the curtains; and, considering such a representation as forbidden by the Scripture, he tore it down, telling the officers of the Church to use it as a wrapper for the bodies of such as were brought there to be interred. He afterwards sent a plain curtain to be put in the place of the one so destroyed, following up this proceeding with a message to the Bishop admonishing him to forbid those painted curtains to be used in future, as being in direct opposition to the commands of Scripture.

A synod was now convened at Cyprus, in which the works of Origen were condemned; and Epiphanius, strengthened by this act of the Church, proceeded to Constantinople, the see whereof was now occupied by Chrysostom, to engage, if possible, that eminent man in the combination, now become so extensive and active, against the writings of Origen, and those who espoused his opinions. In this endeavour, as regarded Chrysostom Epiphanius did not succeed; but some of the bishops then in the city lent him a more favourable ear. His persuasions, supported by the decrees of Cyprus and Alexandria against Origen's works, brought them over to his opinions. But the greater number of them could not be induced to agree with Epiphanius; and though a powerful party of the monks, who had been persecuted in Egypt, and were now come to Constantinople to seek redress, seconded with great zeal his exertions, Chrysostom, who was then upon the archiepiscopal throne, continued firm in his refusal to engage himself to condemn the writings of Origen, till a public examination and a formal sentence should determine the course expedient to be taken. He could neither make Chrysostom an ally, nor the Church of the imperial city the instrument of degrading the memory of Origen, and fixing an indiscriminate reproach upon the products of his illustrious pen. Thus, ill succeeding in the object of his most anxious wishes, Epiphanius set out on his return home, and died on the voyage, at a very advanced age. Of the learning of Epiphanius much has been said, and especially of his extensive acquaintance with languages; but the best judges have allowed him but limited praise for the solidity of his judgment, the correctness of his thinking, or the beneficial use of his extensive erudition.

As Epiphanius was admired by Jerom for his skill in no less than five languages, and was accordingly styled by him *πεντάγλωττος*, we cannot allow ourselves to be hurried into the adoption of Scaliger's invectives, who runs him down as an ignorant man, full of blunders and falsehoods, and knowing nothing, or next to nothing, of either Hebrew or Greek. The sober and just truth is that we owe much to him for his curious collection of facts, as well as for the solidity and utility of his comments and arguments, and more especially for his efforts to arrest the spread of idolatry in his own times. The contents of his third book[1] against the Collyridians, guards us against Mariolatry, or the worship of the Virgin, by the following reasoning, so familiar to the Protestant Christian. His words are these: "Christ said, 'Woman, what have I to do with thee? My hour is not yet come.' That no one might suppose that the holy Virgin was of greater excellency, He called her 'woman,' prophesying, as it were, what manner of sects and heresies would arise in the earth; lest any, holding the holy saint in undue admiration, should slip into this heresy and its extravagancies." The same Father applies to the Collyridians the words of Jeremiah vii. 18: "Let no man partake of the error respecting the holy Virgin; for, although the tree be fair, yet it is not for food. Although Mary is holy and honourable, yet she is not to be adored; but these women (Collyridians) worshipping Mary, renew the sacrifice of wine mixed in honour of the goddess Fortuna (*Ἀνακαινίζουσι τῃ τύχῇ το κέρασμα*), and prepare a table for the devil, not for God; as it is written in the Scripture, 'They eat the bread of wickedness;' and again, 'The children gather wood, and the women knead the dough, to make cakes to the Queen of Heaven.' Let such women be restrained by Jeremiah, and no more trouble the world; and let them not say, 'We honour the Queen of Heaven.'" After considering these passages from Epiphanius, we cannot wonder that he was unacceptable to some of the theologians of his own time, nor expect him to be in favour with some of the religious partisans of the present day.[2]

[1] 'Hæres.' 79.

[2] It is observed by Nicephorus (lib. XV. c. 28), that the first who brought the Virgin's name into the public devotions of the Greek Church was Petrus Gnapheus, a presbyter of Bithynia, afterwards the usurper of the see of Antioch, about A.D. 470; who, though a heretic, "found out four things very useful to the Catholic Church," the last of which was "that in every prayer the Mother of God should be named, and her divine name called upon." Bishop Hall observes, quoting Scaliger's notes on the

Having, in the account given of Epiphanius, brought before the reader, on the great arena whereon the affairs of the Church were unfolding themselves in the latter half of the fourth century, that eminent Father, John, whose eloquence procured for him the name of Chrysostom, I shall proceed with his history,

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New Testament, "that in the Latin Church we have no news of this invocation till Gregory's time, about one hundred and thirty years after the former; and in the meantime some Fathers speak of it fearfully and doubtfully. How could it be otherwise when the common opinion of the ancients below St. Austin's age did put up all the souls of the faithful, except martyrs, in some blind receptacle in the centre of the earth or elsewhere, where they might in candida expectare diem Judicii, as Tertullian hath it four several times."—'The Old Religion,' cxiv. § 1.

I cannot close this note without placing before the reader the impious extent to which this idolatrous worship of the Virgin Mary has been carried since the days of Epiphanius, which will be made sufficiently manifest by referring to "the Psalter of the Blessed Virgin, compiled by the Seraphic Doctor, Saint Bonaventura, Bishop of Albano, also Priest-Cardinal of the Holy Roman Church, in honorem Genetricis Dei; who was born in 1221, and died in 1274. His funeral was attended by the Pope, the cardinals, the Patriarchs of Constantinople and Antioch, and by more than five hundred bishops. He was regularly canonised by Sixtus IV. in 1482; and, by a decretal letter of Sixtus V., [he was enrolled among the illustrious and pre-eminently holy doctors of the Church, in which letter the Pope says, "It was through admiration of the grace which abounded in his lips and his pen, that our predecessor, Pope Sixtus IV. hesitated not to use the expression that the Holy Spirit seems to have spoken in him. In the Roman Breviary a prayer is offered every year on Bonaventura's day, which is thus:—"O God, who hast given the blessed Bonaventura to be a minister of eternal salvation to the people, grant, we beseech Thee, that him whom we have had for our teacher of life upon earth, we may deserve to have for our Intercessor in Heaven."

Now then, in the above-mentioned Psalter, we have the following specimens of blasphemy fully adopted by the Church of Rome.[1]

"Blessed be thou, O Lady, for ever, and thy Majesty, for ever and ever.

"O my Lady, in thee do I put my trust. Deliver me from my enemies, O Lady!

"Preserve me, O Lady! for in thee have I put my trust. Blessed be thy breasts with which thy deifying milk did nourish the Saviour.

"Come unto her all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and she will give rest unto your souls.

"Remember, Lady! and speak good things in our favour, and turn us from the wrath of thy Son.

"Since, O Lady! thou wast most humble, thou didst force the uncreated Word to take flesh from thee.

"Incline to us the countenance of God. Compel Him to have mercy upon sinners.

"Wipe away all our sin. Heal all our infirmities.

"The Lord said unto our Lady, Sit, Mother, on My right hand.

"Holy, Holy, Holy Mary, Mother of God, Mother and Virgin.

"Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the right faith about Mary."

Our old martyrologist, John Foxe, supersedes any remarks I might be induced to add on this choice composition. "Is not here good Catholike stuffe, Christian readers, trow you? Conferre, I beseech you, this doctrine wyth the doctrine of the Apostles, which teach us that we are fullye complet in Christ, and I wil referre me to no better judge than to your own conscience."

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[1] ["I know not," says Bishop Bull, "whether those horrid blasphemies were ever censured and condemned by any public act of the Roman Church.—Bishop Bull's 'Corruptions of the Church of Rome,' in answer to Bossuet.—Ed.]

as coming in due order of succession. He was born at Antioch, about the year 347 of the Christian æra. On his mother's side he was descended from a family of opulence and distinction, and his father, Secundus, held a post of rank in the eastern army of the Roman empire. His mother, whose name was Anthusa, was left a widow in her twentieth year, and continued in that state till her death; the prime part of her existence being wholly engrossed with the care and nurture of her son, who was indebted to her for the formation of his first principles.[1] His eloquence had its birth and early cultivation in the school of Libanius, where he soon attracted the admiration of his teacher, and acquired general applause. For some time he remained under the captivating influence of the specious sophistries of Libanius, who did his best to recommend his pagan principles and creed to his scholars; but the effects of his instructions on the mind of John were successfully counteracted by his pious mother. The first years of study were given by John to ancient literature, with which his mind was much imbued; but this early predilection was soon succeeded by an application to sacred learning, and such a devout study of the Holy Scriptures as was effectual to lay the foundation of his remarkable piety and Christian fortitude, which shone forth peculiarly in the concluding years of his life.

For a short time after the completion of his literary studies he was engaged in the pleadings of the Forum, with other candidates for political distinction. He appears to have merited the applause of Libanius, and to have been much commended by him for combining the cultivation of rhetoric with the pleader's art and profession. "When I received," says Libanius, "your beautiful and elegant composition, I read it to some persons who were well skilled in the rhetorical art; none of whom, when they heard it, could forbear singing out, and vociferating their delight and astonishment."

Soon, however, he forsook the Forum, and chose another arena for the exercise of his abilities. Under the patronage of

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[1] Nonna, the mother of Gregory; Emmelia, the mother of Basil; Monica, the mother of Augustin; and Anthusa, the mother of Chrysostom, were all, among others that might be added, the mothers of great men, and the nurses of great minds. See the Treatise of Chrysostom, 'Ad Viduam juniorem,' v. 1, s. 2, wherein we have the testimony of Libanius to the honour of Christian mothers and wives of the early Christians.

Meletius, Bishop of Antioch, he devoted himself to the study of divinity, and whatever might conduce to qualify him for the sacred ministry. For three years he received instruction in divine things from Meletius, whose fearless profession of his faith in the consubstantiality of the Son with the Father had exposed him to much opposition and persecution from the Arians. Being baptized by him, that ceremony was the epoch of his dedication of himself to the sacred profession.

When Meletius was banished by the Emperor Valens, Chrysostom, no longer under the guidance of his early friend and instructor, who had appointed him a public reader of the Scriptures, preparatory to his receiving ordination, was persuaded by the example of some of his friends, probably after the death of his mother, to join a fraternity of monks in the vicinity of Antioch, with whom he passed some years of ascetic seclusion, in the practice of great self-mortification. In this retirement he studied deeply the Holy Scriptures, lived in prayer and meditation, and composed his eloquent defence of the monastic life, full of good doctrine and generally sound precept, however justly we may refuse our assent to the specific grounds and reasons on which he vindicates and recommends the discipline of his order. His principal argument with parents, to induce them to place their children under the monks for instruction, was the tendency which, in his judgment, that instruction had to qualify them, on their return to active life, for a better discharge of their several duties, and to secure them against the contaminations of the world. It must be confessed, he proposed an education for the young far superior to the vain, ostentatious, and superficial instruction afforded in the schools of the sophists of that day.

After some years spent in monastic retirement, during which Chrysostom pursued his devout exercises with such unremitting ardour that his health became impaired, he returned to Antioch in the year 380 A.D., bringing with him a zeal in behalf of monachism, which for some time seemed principally to occupy his mind, until further experience and inquiry led him gradually to more practical and vital views of his duty as a Christian minister.

After many years of laborious preaching and public teaching as a presbyter at Antioch, Chrysostom was brought from the Syrian capital to the imperial city, by the patronage and influence of Eutropius, the minister of the Emperor Arcadius, to fill the archiepiscopal throne of Constantinople, vacated in the year 397 by the death of Nectarius, the immediate successor of Gregory Nazianzen. Here his piety and extraordinary talents soon made him the object of admiration with some, and of envy with others; of which latter description was the numerous and powerful faction of the Arian heretics; while his free censures of the rich and luxurious, and especially of the gay and profligate females of that class, brought upon him the resentment and persecution of the most powerful about the court, and among the people. If we credit the statements both of Socrates and Sozomen, Chrysostom was naturally irritable. Having entered into conflict with whatever was offensive to Christian holiness and morality among the wealthier classes, he was soon involved in a quarrel with the Empress Eudoxia, whose dissolute manners were the object of his severe public reprehension.

While engaged in this unequal contest, his austerity, privacy, and abstinence, which implicitly rebuked the clergy, and the deposition of twenty bishops on his visitations through his Asiatic provinces, provoked a powerful combination against him, with the Empress at its head. While the enemies of Chrysostom were actively confederated against him, orders were sent to Alexandria for the attendance of Theophilus to establish the charge which he had brought against the monks of Egypt for countenancing and promoting the principles of Origen, a step to which Arcadius had probably been urged as the means of adding great strength to the faction which was now setting every engine to work for bringing about the degradation and expulsion of Chrysostom. Forty-five bishops accompanied Theophilus to the imperial city; twenty were from Egypt, and the residue consisted in part of those Asian bishops whom Chrysostom had deposed. A synod, composed of these and other bishops in the interest of Theophilus, met at the private house of a nobleman called Ruffinus, at Chalcedon, close to whose mansion was a celebrated oak, which gave to the assembly there convened the name of the Synod ad Quercum, or, the Synod of the Oak.

Many articles of impeachment were brought against Chrysostom at this convention, of which the one chiefly insisted upon was the alleged violence of his proceedings against certain officers and dignitaries of the Church, nor was it forgotten that Epiphanius had refused communion with him on account of his favour towards the principles of Origen. Chrysostom refused obedience to the summons to attend this assembly, as being composed of his professed enemies. The evidence against him was, nevertheless, proceeded with, and a sentence of deposition was pronounced. The sentence was executed by his conveyance to a port in the Euxine, and thence into Bithynia; but the excited state of the people, together with the alarm occasioned by an earthquake, so wrought upon the fears of the Emperor and Empress, as to induce them to command his speedy recall. He again entered the city, and was conducted to the cathedral with the pomp and splendour of a triumph. A short interval of tranquillity succeeded, but Chrysostom continued his invectives on the prevailing licentiousness, and pointed his censures especially at the character and manners of the Empress Eudoxia. The tide of hostility was now too strong against the Archbishop for his eloquence or his influence to oppose. His return to his see after his deposition, without the sanction of a fresh synod of greater authority than that by which his deposition was decreed, was made the principal ground of accusation.

Menaced by imperial power, harassed by the military, and almost overwhelmed by his enemies, Chrysostom maintained the contest with unbending fortitude, not a little strengthened and encouraged by a correspondence with Innocentius, the Bishop of Rome, and by the zeal of the great body of the clergy and people on his side. But the imperial authority turned the balance against him; and the vindictive malice of his adversaries was at length gratified by the final expulsion of the great Archbishop. Chrysostom surrendered himself to the imperial officers, and his destiny was no longer doubtful.

He was conveyed away, first into Bithynia, then to Sebastia, and thirdly to Cucusus, a desolate town among the ridges of mount Taurus, in which place, being much comforted by the visits of many eminent persons, his adversaries procured his removal to Pityus, a miserable place on the Pontic shore, in his passage to which place he experienced rough treatment from the soldiers.

In a sick and suffering state of body, and through many difficulties and a harassing journey, he was taken to Comana, a city of Cappadocia, and thence to the Oratory of Basiliscus, who had been Bishop of Comana, and had suffered martyrdom under Maximian. From this place his guards were carrying him to some remoter spot, but such was the feeble condition of their charge that they were induced to bring him again to the Oratory, where, having caused a white garment to be put on, and having received the Holy Eucharist, he stretched himself out, and gently resigned his soul, on the fourteenth day of September, 407, leaving his body beside that of the martyr Basiliscus.

Thus ended the Christian warfare of this great man. Though crushed under the feet of persecution, he died in the arms of victory; illustrated by his obscurity. Neither the ridges of frowning Taurus, nor the length nor difficulties of the way, had stopped the devout correspondence of Chrysostom with his sympathising friends. During the three years of his exile, in which he was transported, in a state of great infirmity and weariness of body, from place to place, inquiry and anxiety concerning him seemed to spread and increase, in proportion to the efforts used to place him out of sight and hearing. Neither the splendour of the capital nor its imperial court were able to divert attention from the little, far distant, spot where the banished prelate still breathed, and made the import of his surname acknowledged, amidst surrounding desolation, and separated by a mountain-barrier from the general commerce of life. Neither did his manliness appear to give way under the pressure of his hard treatment. If, when his prosperity was at its height, the rigour with which his sacerdotal authority was exercised was the subject of various interpretations, no one could now withhold from the solitary saint, on whom faction had exhausted its virulence, the glory which belonged to a greatness sustained by its own resources, and retreating to that fortress of invisible strength whose safety needs not the protection, nor fears the assaults, of men.

Such was Chrysostom, to whom the title of saint more properly belonged than to most on whom it has been bestowed. The effusions of his golden mouth are immortalised in his writings. In them he still breathes and lectures. His eloquence has never been denied. To read him without admiring him would hazard any scholar's reputation. None of the Fathers of the fourth century partook so largely of the *ἰσχὺς Θεῖα*, which was his own phrase in characterising the style of St. John. He greatly surpassed his master, the sophist Libanius, and all the rhetoricians of the time in which he lived, from whom he derived the rudiments of his oratory, if he did not rather borrow them from Aristophanes, as has been said of him, and from the best Athenian models. The muse of Greece unlocked her secret recesses at the touch of his rod, and gave him the command of her treasures. Even the praise of Suidas may not be thought excessive, when he compares his abundance to the cataracts of the Nile.

As to the weight and worth of what is conveyed in the beautiful language of Chrysostom, judgment has usually been pronounced under a bias for or against his religious sentiments: Erasmus has allowed him the praise of vivacity and good sense, and has found an excuse for what he deems to be his errors, in the immaturity of those early times; but Luther, with an unsparing hand, while he grants him to have been an eloquent speaker, charges him with digressing, running astray, swinging about, saying nothing, or little, of that which pertaineth to the business in hand.[1] But, great as was Luther in what most belongs to greatness, in the graces of composition he was unqualified to dictate; and the Fathers of the Church, as we usually call them, whose writings the Romish apostasy has so often pressed abusively into their service, had not in him an impartial appreciator.

There may, indeed, sometimes be justly imputed to Chrysostom a degree of redundancy in his matter, which is nevertheless replete with great and glorious truths. His affluence of expression may have occasionally betrayed him into repetitions, and the beauty of thought and expression may sometimes have been obscured by artificial graces. He is sometimes more fanciful than solid, and sometimes less convincing in argument than copious in illustration; but always most informing and instructive in his censures and exposures of the manners and vices of his age. His letters written during his exile in the recesses of Taurus, are extremely interesting and valuable, and second in ease and brilliance to nothing produced by the Fathers in this department of composition.

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[1] 'Colloq. Mens.' c. 29. In another place he talks of his writings as a wild disordered heap, and a sackful of windy words.

In his work upon the martyr Babylas, he has introduced many sound observations, mingled with much credulity; and this, as well as other of his performances, has proved him to have shared largely in the superstition characteristic of his age. It is due, however, to this venerable man to advert to the many sound and moderate sentiments contained in his two treatises on contrition, and especially in the second, in which, where he speaks of the qualifications necessary for the labours of the ministry, he urges the importance of severe preparatory study, arising from the discontinuance of the gift of working miracles, which called for greater efforts of human instrumentality. The demand upon the Church for its general vigilance, and the peculiar responsibilities of its pastoral engagements, cannot easily be shown to have been enforced with more simplicity, earnestness and solemnity by any writer of any period, than by this great luminary of the fourth century. His Homilies on St. John and the Acts of the Apostles may be recommended in these times for the very sound and safe opinions in which they abound. He directs the catechumens to the living fountains, as the true sources of knowledge, and declares, with holy zeal, their independence on human traditions, and the collateral supplements of man's authority, thus placing the Church in its due subordination to the written testimony. It conduces greatly to the lustre of Chrysostom, that, instead of referring the heathen and the ignorant to the authority and tradition of the Church for doctrine and instruction, he sends them straight to the Bible, with an injunction to search freely, but with docile minds, the sacred record, and to build their Christianity upon its broad foundations.

It may not be uninteresting to my readers to be made acquainted by Chrysostom himself with the incidents of his journey to Cæsarea, in complying with the decree of his banishment from Constantinople the seat of his archbishopric. They are detailed in a letter to his female friend, the pious lady Olympias.[1] We will extract some of the most interesting passages, from which it will but too evidently appear, that though he was the object of much ill usage, patiently endured, he was so far from being insensible to the merit of that endurance as to build upon it a hope too resembling a claim.

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[1] Olympias had been a faithful adherent of Chrysostom during all his troubles in Constantinople. She was a lady of high birth, ample estate, and great beauty, but still more distinguished for her piety and purity of conduct. She had been the wife of Nebridius, a man high in office, who had been put to death on a charge of mal-administration. Notwithstanding many solicitations, she had perseveringly refused to marry again, by which she greatly offended the Emperor Theodosius, who had much importuned her in behalf of his friend, Elpidius. While Nectarius, the successor of Nazianzen, was Archbishop of Constanti-

"Does the dreariness of this place affect you with sorrow on my account? Yet, after all, what can be more agreeable than this sojourn? Behold me in the enjoyment of tranquillity, serenity, a perfect exemption from care, and with health of body. If this city possesses neither forum nor market, in those I have no interest; for all things come to me here in a copious stream, as from a fountain. I have my respected friends, the Bishop and Dioscorus, who seem to have no other concern upon their hands but their study to comfort and refresh me. Moreover, Patricius, that excellent man, will tell you how cheerfully and agreeably, amidst mutual services and kindnesses, we pass our time in this place, such as it is.[1] But if the things which befel me in my passage through Cæsarea cause you uneasiness, you do not in this thing act as becomes you; for there, also, were crowns wrought for me of true lustre. All are pleased to praise and commend me, and are amazed when they hear of my ejection, and the many grievous injuries which accompanied it. . . . . After I had entered into Cæsarea, being worn down with fatigue and exhaustion, in an advanced state of fever, suffering great pain and extreme weariness, I found a lodging, situated at the very extremity of the city, and set about obtaining medical aid to allay the furnace within me, for I was then in the crisis of a tertian fever. To this were added the harass and fatigue of the journey, the wear and consumption of the bodily frame, the want of persons near me to take any care of me, and the utter destitution of all things necessary to such a condition. No physicians to have recourse to. Labour, lassitude, and the heat of the weather had brought me to the lowest state, so that I entered the city rather dead than alive. Then all the clergy, the

nople, she was made deaconess of the Church, from which she is said to have seldom departed, night or day. Chrysostom wrote seventeen letters to her during his exile. She was afterwards herself banished to Nicomedia, from whence she sent frequent helps to Chrysostom, and there she ended her days.

[1] It appears that on coming to Cucusus the time of Chrysostom passed in the first instance agreeably enough; but as winter came on, his health sunk under the rigours of the season; and for two months he seemed to be in a dying condition. Added to this the Isaurians were carrying death and desolation through the country, and he was in daily expectation of them; so that he lived in constant peril, and was at times very nearly falling into their hands.

people, the monks, and medical men flowed in upon me, all waiting upon me and proffering their services. Meanwhile, the fever was raging within me, and I was in the greatest danger. At length the disorder began to abate. But as yet no appearance of Pharetrius. In truth, he was looking for my departure.[1] When, therefore, I found my disorder sensibly abated, I began to think of setting forward, that I might reach Cucusus, and enjoy a little repose from the fatigues and vexations of my journey. But while things were in this state, news was suddenly brought me that the Isaurians, with a countless force, were laying waste the territory about Cæsarea, that they had burned a large town, and committed great slaughter. On hearing this, the Tribune collected what force he could, and marched out of the city, which he expected to be immediately attacked by the barbarians.

"While things were in this posture, on a sudden, at early dawn, a cohort of monks (for I may be allowed to use this word to express their violence) came to the house where I was lodged, threatening to set it on fire, and to proceed to every extremity, if I did not forthwith leave the city. Neither the dread of the Isaurians, nor the disorder by which I was still oppressed, nor any other consideration, could moderate their fury; but breathing only violence, they insisted upon my compliance with such vehemence that the soldiers themselves were overawed; for they devoted them to all sorts of plagues, and boasted that they had shamefully handled, before them, many soldiers of the city guard. Hearing these words, the soldiers came and besought me, that, even if I must do it at the risk of being set upon by the Isaurian bands, I would deliver them from these brutes. When this was told the prefect of the city, he came to our house to give us his protection. But not even by his entreaties were the monks at all moved, and he himself was losing his courage. Not seeing, therefore, any escape from the difficulty, and being unwilling to send us out to certain destruction, he sent to Pharetrius, imploring him earnestly that, as well on account of the disorder under which I was suffering, as of the impending danger from the barbarians, he would allow me a few days' delay. But even this availed nothing; on the next day the attack upon me was more furious. Nor did any of the presbyters venture to bring us any assistance; but with shame and confusion, for they confessed that all was done with the full consent and by the direction of Pharetrius, withdrew and concealed themselves, nor paid any attention to our summons when sent for.

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[1] Pharetrius was at this time the Bishop of Cæsarea. He seemed to be acting towards Chrysostom with great dissimulation, and a secret desire to compel his departure. When we look at the shameful conduct of this man, holding such a high authority and so responsible a station, with an army of brutal monks ready to execute his will, in defiance of all decency, humanity, and law, we have before us a picture of manners and a state of society which exhibit the Christian Church of the fourth century in a very degraded character.

"But what need of further details? Although so many terrors hung over us, and death seemed almost certain, and looked us in the face, while the fever robbed me of all strength, at about the hour of noon, throwing myself into my litter, I left the city, where all the people were lamenting and bewailing my departure, and execrating and devoting to perdition the person who had occasioned it. When I had proceeded some way out of the city, some of the ecclesiastics followed me in great sorrow, exclaiming, "Whither are you going to certain destruction?" While another of the party attached to us, addressing me, cried, 'Go, I beseech you; go, fall into the hands of the Isaurians; only escape from us! For into whosesoever hands you fall, it will be safety to be rescued from ours.'

"Seleucia, that excellent lady, the wife of my Lord Ruffinus, finding things in this train, besought me to accept a lodging in her villa, distant from the city about five miles, and sent persons to conduct me thither. Nor were these plots to be terminated by this removal; for as soon as Pharetrius was made acquainted with what had happened, he assailed with threats the lady herself. All which was kept from me when I was received into her villa. When she came out to meet me she mentioned nothing of it; but, explaining the affair to her steward, ordered him to be serviceable to me in everything, and, if the monks should come to abuse or ill-treat me, to call together the labourers in her other villas, and to contend hand to hand with the monks; desiring me to take refuge with her, as her house had a strong tower in it, strong enough to resist any attacks that could be made upon it, that thus I might be safe from the hands both of the bishop and the monks.[1] This, however, I was not persuaded to consent to. . . . . In the middle of the night, while I was in ignorance of what was going on, Pharetrius came, and, with vehement menaces, insisted upon my being ejected from the city's suburbs; so that the lady, being unable to bear the importunity of this man any longer without my knowing it, gave him to understand that the barbarians were near at hand. After this, at dead of night, the presbyter, Evetheus, coming in and rousing me from sleep, clamoured out, 'Rise, I beseech you, the barbarians are coming, and are close upon us.'

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[1] The particulars of this journey of Chrysostom to his place of banishment are very curious and interesting, and afford a picture of the state of manners at this period as graphic and expressive as any accounts which have come down to us.

"The night was dark, moonless, and very gloomy; which aggravated the distress occasioned by the want of some guide to direct us; nor was any with us who could help us. All had abandoned us. Nevertheless, compelled by the danger in which we felt ourselves, expecting death every moment, and almost sinking under my vexations, I rose and desired torches to be lighted; but these the presbyter ordered to be extinguished, lest, as he said, the barbarians, attracted by the light, might rush upon us. The torches, therefore, being put out, the mule which carried my litter, the way being very difficult, rough, and stony, fell upon his knees, bringing my litter with myself to the ground, and I well nigh lost my life by the accident. Rising from the ground, I crawled along, Evetheus, who had leaped from his horse, holding me by my hands; and thus conducted, or rather dragged, I crept along. Such was the difficulty of the way, and so perilous the passage through the mountains in the darkness of the night, that I was unable to use my feet. Judge, therefore, what was my state of mind; surrounded by such evils, oppressed with fever, ignorant of what was in preparation for me, in dread of the barbarians, and expecting nothing less than to fall into their hands. Do you not think that all these calamities, if nothing else had befallen me, would avail to absolve many of my sins, and bring me much occasion of glory?[1]

"But of all these sufferings which I have been made to endure, I take this to have been the cause. On my entering Cæsarea, all the persons in any offices of the magistracy, lieutenancies, or presidencies, sophists, ex-tribunes, and the common people generally, came every day to visit and pay their court to me. And this it was, I verily believe, which excited the jealousy of Pharetrius. Nor do I think that the envy which drove me from Constantinople ceased to persecute me at Cæsarea. At least, this is my suspicion; and who can recount those other things which were yet to be endured on my journey?

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[1] The Greek words are, *πολλὰ ἡμῶν δύνανται διαλύειν τῶν ἁμαρτημάτων, καὶ πολλὴν μὸι παρέχειν ἐυδοκιμήσεως ἀφορμὴν.* These views frequently occur in the letters of St. Chrysostom.

"But let me assure you that I am now entirely free from vexations, and that I enjoy better health than at Constantinople. And the cold, too, why should you so dread it for me, since a commodious dwelling has now been prepared for me, and my Lord Dioscorus has taken every precaution to prevent my feeling the slightest inconvenience from cold? But if a conjecture as to the future may be formed from the beginning of my sojourn here, the climate is quite oriental, and not inferior to that of Antioch, so genial and temperate is the air.

"But 'something,' you have said, 'has given me pain.' Perhaps you are displeased with me for having been neglectful, through inadvertence, of my duty to you. But the truth is, I long ago despatched a letter to you, entreating you to take no steps to obtain my removal from this place. I had considered with myself that there would be need of a long argument, and much effort and labour, to satisfy me about an expression which you used; although, perhaps, I should have been satisfied when the import of the words used was properly understood. The words were these—'My only thought is how I may increase my suffering.' I regard it as something highly sinful, that you profess, voluntarily and designedly, to encourage thoughts that bring sorrow with them. For as you certainly are in duty to yourself bound to try and contrive everything to obliterate sadness from your mind, you do what is agreeable to Satan by augmenting your grief and trouble. Have you never considered how evil a thing is sorrow? Concerning the Isaurians, you need after this feel no uneasiness, for they have gone back to their own country. We are much safer here than we were at Cæsarea."

Such were the sufferings and sentiments of this great man in the first days of his banishment. His frame seems to have been ill adapted to sustain the vicissitudes of the mountainous region in which he had been compelled to settle. The winter was a period of so much bodily suffering, that although the return of spring brought some suspension of his maladies, and some revival of spirits and strength, the shocks of the various changes to which he was exposed hastened the catastrophe of his solemn and affecting departure. It is thus he begins a subsequent letter to the pious deaconess Olympias.

"I write this just recalled from the gates of death. . . . . The winter, setting in with unusual severity, brought, as it were, a severer winter into my stomach, and has made me pass two months in a state of suffering not less sharp, but rather more grievous than the agonies of death itself. All that I seemed to live for was to be sensible of the evils with which I was surrounded. Whether it was morning or noon, it signified not—all was only night to me. I passed entire days without rising from my bed; and although I used a thousand contrivances to obtain warmth, I was wholly unable to remove the bitter cold which invaded me. For although I kept a good fire, endured all the evil of smoke, kept close in bed wrapped in a multitude of coverings, and never ventured to the door, I nevertheless endured extreme torture—excessive nausea, headache, loathing of food, and nights perpetually without sleep. Each sleepless night was like a long voyage on the ocean. But that I may not torment you by dwelling any longer upon these troubles, know that I am now happily delivered from them all. For as soon as the spring made its appearance, all my ailments, of their own accord, took leave of me. But still there is need of great caution in the regulation of my diet."

The remainder of this letter is devoted to an elaborate panegyric in celebration of the excellences of her to whom it is addressed, which seems rather to surpass the bounds of compliment suited to a Christian correspondence, and can be justified only by the extraordinary claims of the lady upon the gratitude of a mind of remarkable sensibility to the acts of friendship. The letters of Chrysostom well deserve a diligent perusal; the whole of the published collection amounts to two hundred and forty-two, all written from Cucusus, the dreary place of his exile, and during the last three years of his existence upon earth. From letters written under such circumstances, and from such an abode, it were unreasonable to expect a great variety of matter. One shade of melancholy rests upon them all, but the melancholy of a mind receiving every dispensation as the work of mercy and the discipline of grace. He bore his banishment, not indeed without occasional complaint, but in general with more than philosophic firmness, and even with the cheerful fortitude of a Christian soldier. If his behaviour be compared with that of Cicero under similar circumstances, he comes before us in a light of unquestionable superiority.

But still in these letters we do not perceive, in their just and beautiful proportions, those supports under affliction which we look for in a sainted Father of the Church of Christ. There are not found in them any distinct references to the Cross of Jesus, or to the love and sympathy of that Divine Participator in human sorrows who has offered the refreshment of His hallowed rest to the weary and heavy-laden. If we do not find in Chrysostom too high an opinion of his own deserts, we cannot but discover in his letters a tendency to claim the rewards of heaven on a title simply based on his sufferings and persecutions. For the pleasures, riches, and honours of the world he everywhere exhibits a magnanimous contempt. But although he looks upon everything of extraneous splendour with indifference, he seems hardly to have penetrated his own interior enough fully to recognise his natural corruption and need of pardon. Had he watched with more jealousy the movements of his own heart, and cultivated a closer acquaintance with his own short-comings, had he laid his foundation more in self-knowledge, and been a better proficient in the school of Christ, there would have been more of the Cross and less of the crosier in his epistles ; he would probably have talked more of gratitude than recompence, and have shown himself more fully impressed with the solemn truth that before a perfect God no works of an imperfect being can merit acceptance, much less entitle to *reward*.

The letters of Chrysostom bear so favourable a testimony on behalf of his numerous correspondents that one is almost ready to accept them as evidence of a preponderancy of Christian virtue in the time in which he lived, especially among the sacred orders of the Church ; but an improved acquaintance with the epistolary style and character in use among the distinguished men of Chrysostom's day, leads to a suspicion that the language of commendation expressed so frequently in the same identical terms was little more than the current form of compliment and courtesy. The real history of the time, as it partly appears in the malicious and revengeful treatment experienced by Chrysostom at the hands of the various dignitaries of the Church, is demonstrative of the contentious, ambitious, and factious spirit by which Christendom was agitated and disgraced in the fourth century.

Of the general character of Chrysostom there are many testimonies, from which we gather that his temper was naturally warm and irritable, moderated, however, we cannot doubt, by the restraints of Christian forbearance. What was not quenched of his natural fire seemed principally to discover itself in the fervour and vehemence with which, in defiance of consequences, he persevered in his dangerous duties in the face of potent and implacable enemies. If it be laid to his charge that he was defective in worldly prudence, let it be remembered that to please the world was no part of his plan, and that in following out his professed designs and purposes, which he placed far above all worldly motives, he was conspicuously correct and consistent. Ordinary rules could hardly hold within their jurisdiction a mind so much above the measure of common attainments, with a vocation before it which reduced to nothing the calls of self-interest and expedience. He possessed the means in an eminent degree of attracting the homage and admiration of his contemporaries, but he seems to have been a genuine despiser of all popularity among the great as well as the people. In his office of bishop he was unwearied in his labours, and was rarely seen in public but in the discharge of the duties of prayer and preaching. His eloquence was full of force and persuasion, and extremely rapid; nor were the graces of composition less at his command —an abundance, it must be owned, that not seldom lost its value in its luxuriance and excess, more especially in his orations pronounced at Antioch. His various discourses, commentaries, orations, and the other productions of his pen, are very numerous, and hardly do the works of any two of the Greek Fathers equal them in number; none, perhaps, are more perused and studied. The impress of his mind is still fresh and glowing on the broad expanse of the world's literature, and his golden mouth is still oracular.

From Palladius[1] and the Greek Menologium we gather some intimations of the person of Chrysostom.[1] He appears to have been of low stature, with a capacious forehead, little hair, a wrinkled countenance, and eyes sunk in their sockets, but mild and penetrating; his cheeks were hollow, and in his latter days he bore the aspect of a mortified man. Among the Fathers of the fourth century there are none on whose memorial a Christian fixes with deeper interest his devout attention.

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[1] Palladius was born in Galatia in 368, and died in 431. When he was twenty years old he appears to have visited Egypt, where he passed some years, and much of that time among the monks in the desert of Nitria, to become acquainted, as alleged, with the different practices, orders, and discipline. But the

Among the worthies of the fourth century, we must not omit Ephrem Syrus. Ephraim, Ephraem, or Ephrem (for thus variously his name is spelt), was a Syrian writer of very considerable eminence. He was born at Nisibis, or Edessa, and during the reign of Constantine; but the exact time of his birth is uncertain. His parents were Christians, and are said to have given him a pious and virtuous education. His serious turn of mind, even in his early youth, led him, agreeably to the fashion of the times, to seek the shelter and seclusion of a monastery; and the leisure and repose which he enjoyed in his convent appear to have been so well improved, that from a simple monk he was promoted to preside over the society; but the best lesson which he learned within his convent was that he had duties to discharge for which a convent is unsuitable. He forsook his seclusion, and found in the city of Edessa an ample field for active usefulness. There he became soon conspicuous as an instructor of his fellow-

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climate not agreeing with his health, he came to Palestine, and lived there a monastic life; till, about the year 400, he went into Bithynia, and was ordained Bishop of Helenopolis by Chrysostom, which preferment was afterwards exchanged for Astrona, in Galatia. To one of this name several works are ascribed; as the 'Lausiac History,' which seems to have been written in 421, containing the lives of persons who were then celebrated for their ascetic austerities in Egypt and Palestine, and a dialogue concerning the life of St. John Chrysostom, between Palladius and Theodorus. But whether the 'Lausiac History' and the above-mentioned dialogue were both written by one person, or by two different persons of the same name seems to be doubted. Dupin thinks they were written by the same hand. The author of the 'Lausiac History' seems to have been a person of moderate erudition, but a plain and perspicuous writer. The first edition in Greek was published by Meursius, and several Latin translations are extant; one by Tronto le Duc in his 'Auctarium Biblioth. Patr.,' tom. II. p. 893. Paris, 1624. Folio. The 'Dialogue or Eulogy on Chrysostom,' Gr. and Lat., by Emer. Begot, Paris, 1680; and again, 1738, quarto; with some other productions.

[1] The Menologium, in the Greek Church, resembles the Martyrology or Calendar in the Latin. It is divided according to the several months of the year, containing short accounts of the lives of some of the saints, and the names of others, The Greeks have more than one menology, on which no great dependence can be placed. The distinction is not always preserved between saints and heretics.

countrymen. Many Syrians of distinction became his pupils, and he edified the Church still more extensively by his valuable writings, both expository and devotional. So great was his reputation as a divine, that his works, written in the Syriac, were translated, during his lifetime, into Greek, and were read, even in the churches, next after Holy Scripture, as a suitable accompaniment. The estimation, indeed, in which he was held by his contemporaries may be inferred from the lofty designation which was given him of "the prophet of the Syrians." Having been ordained a deacon at Edessa, he is said to have received priest's orders at the hands of the renowned Basil; but the fact is doubtful, and still more so is the statement that from the same distinguished man he derived his acquaintance with the Greek language. It is certain, however, that he was elected to a bishopric, and that he was as anxious to escape that preferment as many are to obtain it. No sooner did he hear of his election than he rushed like a maniac into the public market-place to show to the people his unfitness for the holy office. He successfully concealed himself till the vacancy was supplied, and then reappeared. Having become acquainted with Basil, he became his admirer, and passed some time with him at Cæsarea in Cappadocia.

Ephrem was a voluminous writer.[1] We are told by Photius that he composed a thousand orations, which were considered among his contemporaries as surpassing specimens of eloquence. Some of his various theological treatises are still extant, and in high repute. He was prolific also as a poet, being the author, according to Sozomen, of three hundred thousand verses. In the maintenance of the orthodox doctrine against the heresies of Sabellius, Arius, and Apollinarius, his zeal and exertions were great and successful. His treatment of the last of these heretics, as related by Gregory, furnishes a curious specimen of those not very creditable artifices which were considered in those days to be justified by the end to be promoted by them. Apollinarius had written, as it seems, an apology for his opinions, which he had entrusted to a female friend. This work Ephrem contrived to get into his hands by feigning himself to be a convert to the writer's doctrines; but before he returned the MS. he glued the leaves together. The lady, not suspecting the artifice, sent back the volume to the author in the condition she received it in, to be used in a controversy he was then about to hold with a Catholic opponent. Great was his confusion when, on seeking to avail himself of its assistance, he found it a sealed book!

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[1] It is a curious fact that a MS., containing several works of Ephrem in the Greek language, was discovered to be a Codex rescriptus or palimpsest, containing, in uncial or capital letters, but partially erased, a considerable portion of the Septuagint and the entire New Testament, the date of which is conceived to have been as early as the sixth century, and the discovery therefore was considered to be one of no small importance. See a fuller account of it in Horne's 'Critical Introduction,' vol. II. 112.

In another instance the zeal of Ephrem to check the growth of heresy was manifested in a more commendable manner. The vehicle of poetry was then in use, as now, for the diffusion of mischievous errors. In hymns these evils were sent abroad in their most imposing forms. Ephrem met the mischief by the same weapons. In the same metre the orthodox opinions of the Church were advocated and illustrated by his pen, and his sound effusions obtained considerable credit and currency. He wrote also a treatise upon psalmody, in which idle songs and vicious merriment met with their due reprehension.[1]

A remarkable instance is related of his enterprising philanthropy, which does the highest honour to his Christian character. Edessa was visited at one time with a grievous famine, and Ephrem, who was then immured within his cell, was drawn from his retirement by an anxiety to do his best for the assistance of his starving countrymen. He addressed himself on this occasion to the wealthier classes, and so effectually, that they declared themselves ready to come forward with their money could they but find a suitable person to dispense it. Ephrem promptly offered himself to be their almoner; and on their consenting to employ him, and furnishing him with the necessary funds, he caused three hundred beds to be brought into the public cloisters of the city for the accommodation of the sick, and ministered to their wants until the famine ceased.[2]

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[1] [He was the author also of a metrical oration, entitled 'The Repentance of Nineveh,' which was translated some years ago by the Rev. Dr. Burgess, and of which he says that "it is perhaps the most remarkable of the numerous works of this celebrated Father of the Church. Although apparently," he observes, "composed for the pulpit, it is in reality a fine epic poem, describing, with great force of imagination, the results of the mission of the prophet Jonah to Nineveh." Dr. Burgess has also translated the 'Hymns and Homilies of Ephraem.' —Ed.]

[2] Milner remarks:—"In this occasional sally we see the outlines of a *general infirmary* drawn and brought into

Ephrem was no less distinguished for his purity and temperance than for his benevolence. That he might not offend against his principles in this respect, he is said to have gone the length of shunning all communication with females. A dissolute woman, whether self-prompted or at the instigation of others, intercepted him on one occasion in a narrow passage, and fixed on him a bold and steady gaze. On receiving a rebuke from him, and an admonition to cast her eyes rather in shame upon the ground, "Why should I do so?" was her answer, "since I am not made out of the earth, but of thee. It is more reasonable that thou shouldst look upon the ground, from which thou hadst thine original; but that I should look upon thee, from whom I was procreated." Ephrem, surprised at this unexpected reply, put the conversation on record in what the Syrians esteem one of the best of his writings.

Milner has given us some interesting extracts from Ephrem's works, which express deep humility and self-acquaintance. The following is a specimen:—"From my childhood I have been a vessel unprofitable and dishonourable. Warning others, I have fallen myself into their evils twofold. Woe is me! Whence can there be any refuge, unless the mercies of God shine quickly upon me? Nor is there one hope of salvation from works: while I speak of purity, I am thinking of uncleanness: while I am uttering rules for the conquest of the passions, my own are inwardly raging night and day. What excuse can I make? Alas! what a scrutiny must I undergo! I have had the form, without the power, of godliness. I fear lest fire from heaven should consume me, as it did the two sons of Aaron. Shall I then despair of salvation? By no means. This the adversary desires, in order to destroy me. I do not throw away myself as lost; I confide in the mercies of God; I pray Thee cast me not away. Thou knowest the wounds of my soul; heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed. What shame will seize me when those who now count me holy shall see me condemned, and when all secrets shall be laid open!"[1]

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practice by a monk." But the honour of first originating such an institution seems to be awarded by Jerom to a lady named Fabiola, of whom he says, "Prima omnium νοσοκομεῖον instituit, in quo ægrotantes colligeret de plateis, et consumpta languoribus atque inedia miserorum membra foveret."—Epist 30 'Ad Oceanum,' c. 2.

[1] In the third volume of his works, as edited by Vossius, are some sermons *de laudibus Mariæ*, in which the following

His last will and testament is couched in humble language, though considerably tinged with the superstitions of the times. Ignorant to no small extent of the fulness and sufficiency of his Saviour's sacrifice, he begs of his surviving friends their prayers and offerings. He was anxious, however, not to be honoured after his departure with the superstitious veneration then too often rendered to departed saints. He forbade the monks who were about him to preserve his clothes as relics, and requested to be buried without pomp, and that no monument should mark the place of his interment. He died during the reign of Valens and in the year 378.

Of Theophilus and Cyril, uncle and nephew, successively bishops of Alexandria, ecclesiastical history makes no such mention as will justify any great homage to their memory. The youth of Theophilus is supposed to have been spent in the deserts of Nitria, among the turbulent monks of that agitated quarter, part of whom were Anthropomorphists, and part the undistinguishing votaries of Origen and his opinions. Theophilus appears to have set out an Origenist, and to have ended his career, if not as an Anthropomorphite, at least as a leader in the factious confederacy of which the Anthropomorphites formed the most disturbing portion. Having been for some time a presbyter, he became bishop in 385. In three years afterwards, when Theodosius and Maximus were contending for the empire, he is said to have sent his legate to Rome with letters and presents to both the aspirants, with instructions to delay the delivery till the battle should have decided to whom they were to be considered as directed. After being engaged in a sanguinary conflict with the monks, who were the zealous maintainers of the character and works of Origen, he carried his active hostility against that party into the heart of the imperial city, and was the great instrument in bringing about the deposition and expulsion of Chrysostom in the year 403. To have greatly assisted in fomenting the discord which at this juncture distracted the Church from east to west, was that which gave the principal celebrity to the character of Theophilus. While at Jerusalem

supplication is addressed to her, "Sub alis tuis custodi me," "Keep me under thy wings." It seems, however, that the genuineness of many of these sermons has been called in question, and the author of them has been styled by Crakanthorp, "Impostor, non Pater."—*Vide* Calfhill's 'Answer to Martiall.'—P. Soc. Ed., p. 258.

and Constantinople the partisans and opponents of the doctrines of Origen were carrying their mutual hostility to the fiercest excesses, the west was equally disturbed by the angry and intemperate quarrel of Jerom and Rufinus. Of the works of Theophilus only a few epistles and some considerable extracts from his other writings remain. He died in the year 412.

From 412, the year of the death of Theophilus, the chair of Alexandria was filled by Cyril, his nephew, who succeeded to the vehemence of his character, and kept up the tumultuous condition of the see and of the Church in general by the contests in which he engaged, and by the persecuting spirit which he carried into them. He began with a violent attack upon the Novatians, and by arrogating the right of ecclesiastical sway in political affairs, engaged in a quarrel with Orestes, the Governor of Egypt, and in ambitious disputes with the secular administration of the province, which led to insurrection and bloodshedding. He was even accused of being accessory to the murder of Hypatia, to whose unhappy fate we shall hereafter have occasion to allude in our account of Synesius. He is accused also of causing the synagogue of the Jews in Alexandria to be plundered and demolished. The contentions respecting the opinions of Origen, which Theophilus had been so instrumental in fomenting, gave place, under the episcopate of the nephew, to the violent and spreading quarrel with the Nestorians, in which Cyril bore by far the most conspicuous part.

Nestorius was raised to the see of Constantinople in the year 328, and soon after his elevation began to preach and to permit to be preached in the pulpits of his diocese a doctrine respecting the second Person of the Trinity, which raised an alarm in the Church. At the commencement of his episcopal government no bishop could be more active and zealous than Nestorius in the condemnation and suppression of heresies; but in a short time his own offensive opinion transpired, which consisted in his maintaining that in the Person of Christ the two natures of the Divinity and humanity were not so united as to form but *one* Person, which union is commonly expressed by the phrase "hypostatic union." On so mysterious a subject any terms or phrases out of the strait and technical forms of expression which the authoritative formula had adopted must evidently have been used with great danger of misconstruction;

Nestorius always complained that his language and meaning had been much misunderstood. He even denied that it was imputable to him to maintain that the Divine Nature joined itself to the completed Man, and only lent Him assistance during His life.[1] He does appear to have made use of some rather vague and ambiguous terms; but his rejection of the appellation of "Mother of God" was the stock from which the greatest offence grew. It subjected the character of Nestorius' theology to the severest censures of the Church, and principally exasperated the haughty and tenacious mind of Cyril. The phrase does not occur in Scripture, and is, to say the least, unnecessary, while the confused notion which it presents makes it susceptible of very dangerous and monstrous inferences and deductions. In the idiom of the Church of Rome it stands out in very blasphemous prominence.

It would be giving too little weight to the controversy to say that the dispute with Nestorius was a mere logomachy; but one cannot help seeing that the fiery temper and presumptuous self-sufficiency of Cyril aggravated and multiplied the points of contention, and widened a breach which a conference, the opposite in character to that which was maintained in the Council of Ephesus, might have repaired and reconciled.

It would seem that the whole controversy arose from a difference of opinion as to the propriety of using certain phrases, wherein, although other questions were involved which, as the contest increased in acrimony, increased the disposition on either side to reciprocate charges and wilful mistakes, it is not easy to discern the precise quality of the error which the orthodox imputed to Nestorius and his followers. Certain it is that he considered it to be improper in expression to say that Mary bore the Deity, or that what was born of Mary was God. He would rather say that she was Χριστοτόκος than Θεοτόκος, the Mother of Christ than the Mother of God; and his tenet was, that although Christ was God and man, yet as what was man only suffered upon the Cross, the Person of Jesus Christ was a different Person from God, and thus he was accused of maintaining that there were two Persons in Jesus Christ. In avoiding the error of

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[1] See Marius Mercator, 'Opp.', tom. II. p. 286, ed. Garnier; and the fragments of epistles written by Nestorius shortly before his death. 'Biblioth. Oriental.,' Vatican, tom. II. pp. 40, 41.

Apollinaris, who put Deity in the place of the human soul, he may have been thrown into an opposite extreme, at least in statement; and in his care to keep the notion of Deity and of the Divine Essence apart from the entire humanity of soul and body, he may have seemed to sever the union of the two natures by supposing a duality of persons in the one Christ. That the Divine and human natures met in the unity of Person in Christ Jesus, without confusion of substance, may be considered as expressing the orthodox and Catholic belief, and surely it was not necessary to avow the Virgin Mary to be the Mother of God to be in accordance with the doctrine last mentioned. But the simple rejection of that phrase as untenable and profane was the real and original ground of offence. Nestorius and his disciples were thus cast upon a process of vindication in which great subtlety and refinement were necessarily employed, till the subject became perplexed and the contest inflamed by angry altercation and unseemly invective. That Nestorius was not much behind his adversary in the asperities of debate could not be denied, but it must be admitted that he was not a little provoked by misrepresentation of his opinions. He does not seem to have denied that it was man in union with God, that is, the one Christ that suffered, died, and was buried, while he strenuously denied that Christ, in so far as He was God, was subject to any of these changes. He did, indeed, sometimes adopt a certain mode of expression which laid him open to misstatement or mistake. That "the Son of God dwells in man; that the flesh is the *temple* of God; that the human nature was an instrument by which God worked—a garment with which He was clad, and that God carried and bare the Man," were phrases and similitudes too diffusive and vague in their tendency to be prudently introduced into so solemn and discriminative an inquiry. It must not be forgotten, however, that Nestorius distinctly averred the Three Persons in the Divine Essence, and the great doctrines of the Nicene Creed, and was correct in the main articles of a pure faith.

The proceedings against Nestorius, which followed each other in rapid succession, began with a council in Rome convened by Pope Celestine, in 430, in the month of August, in which the tenets of Nestorius were pronounced to be erroneous. In about a month afterwards Cyril assembled a council in Egypt, in which sentence was given according to the judgment pronounced in Rome, the execution of which had been suspended. Before the sentence was signified to Nestorius, Theodosius II. had been persuaded to summon a council at Ephesus, which accordingly took place in the Whitsuntide of the following year, to which Cyril repaired with fifty bishops from Egypt. The Eastern bishops had not arrived at the time appointed for the meeting, and Cyril, and Memnon the Bishop of Ephesus, and the other bishops from Palestine, could not be persuaded to wait for them. Nestorius refused to attend till John of Antioch and the Eastern bishops were present, and the Council proceeded, without further delay, in their absence. In this first sitting, sentence of condemnation was passed upon Nestorius for the maintenance of doctrines which were pronounced to be decidedly heretical. John of Antioch, and the bishops of the East, some little time after the sentence had been transmitted to the Emperor, arrived at Ephesus; but no regard being had to the party thus newly arrived, and admission into the Council being, as it was said, almost refused to them, Nestorius held a separate council at his residence in the city, and thus a noisy conflict was maintained between the sections of this tumultuous assembly.

When the proceedings of the contending parties were made known to the Emperor, he pronounced all that had been hitherto done of no effect, and directed the Synod to proceed anew. The legates from Celestine, Bishop of Rome, did not arrive at Ephesus till July in the year 431. They were admitted to the Council, and the acts of the first session being read to them, they subscribed the condemnation of Nestorius, and the Emperor approved the judgment. The next proceeding was against John of Antioch, and as he refused to attend on being thrice summoned, all that had been done by him against Cyril and Memnon was annulled, and he was declared to be excommunicated, together with the bishops who had accompanied him to Ephesus. The Council protracted its proceedings through seven sittings. Theodosius, after declaring his displeasure at the contentious character of the Council, deposed Nestorius from the see of Constantinople, and banished him to a monastery at Antioch. After some resistance, John of Antioch gave way, and signed the condemnation of Nestorius, who was driven from his monastery and banished, first to Petra in Arabia, and then to Oasis, a desert place near Egypt, where he died, as it seems, about the year 439. Thus ended this irregular and intemperate Council, which, notwithstanding the character of its proceedings, has always been regarded as one of the œcumenical councils of the highest order.

The decrees of the Council of Ephesus were ineffectual against the principles and name of Nestorius. His doctrines, or such as passed for his, were spread and established in various remote parts of the East, as well as among many of the Roman provinces in Asia. In Persia, and especially in the famous school at Edessa, they rose to great celebrity, and maintained a footing from Assyria to the borders of the Caspian Sea. But it was, doubtless, rather the Nestorian name than any well-defined creed that propagated itself in so many directions; and many of the sects which have passed under that name disclaim that nominal distinction, and even carry back the origin of their pretensions to a much higher date than the age of Nestorius.[1]

The part which Cyril acted in his controversy with Nestorius, and in the proceedings of the Council of Ephesus, has turned the eyes of posterity towards him with a feeling little short of disgust; and if the horrid cruelties practised on Hypatia were in any degree ascribable to his silence or acquiescence, we must agree that the title of Saint was never more degraded than by its annexation to the name of Cyril of Alexandria. But his memory has not been without its vindicators from a charge so covering it with ignominy. He has left, among his voluminous works, letters to the number of sixty-one; all controversial, and nearly all relating to the Nestorian controversy, of which there is one which contains twelve deliberate curses[1] pronounced against him to whom it owed its birth. The works of Cyril are voluminous, and, though written in a style inelegant and unpolished, bear the marks of a strong and acute intellect. They consist, in great part, of expositions of Scripture, of the Pentateuch, Isaiah, the minor prophets, and the Gospel of St. John. He wrote also ten books against Julian, some discourses, and numerous treatises against the Arians, Nestorians, and other heretical sects. They are little disturbed in their dusty repose. The vehemence which vented itself in anathemas in his lifetime has been rewarded with the posthumous neglect which it so well deserved. He died in 444.

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[1] From the year 440 to 485 Barsumas, who was ejected from the school of Edessa, and made Bishop of Nisibis in 435, "laboured," says Mosheim, "with incredible assiduity and dexterity to procure for Nestorianism a permanent establishment in Persia." His measures were so successful that all the Nestorians in Chaldea, Persia, Assyria, and the neighbouring countries, reverence this Barsumas alone, to this day, as their parent and founder. But those whom we call Nestorians are, in many parts, more generally called Chaldaic Christians, their principal Church being in the ancient Chaldea; and, in some part of the East Indies, St. Thomas's Christians, it being supposed that their conversion had been the work of St. Thomas. Under this last denomination they form rather a numerous body, having their own councils and ecclesiastical rulers, unconnected with any other Church.

Those who retained the name of Nestorians in the East, after the death of Barsumas, acknowledged Babacus, the Archbishop of Seleucia, as their ecclesiastical head, and their patriarchs continued to reside in Seleucia till their seat was transferred to Bagdad and Mosul, under the caliphate. Their customs are their own; and among other peculiarities, their clergy are required to marry, and even to contract second marriages. They still refuse to call Mary the Mother of God, or to say that God was crucified. They worship no images; use unction as a ceremony in their worship, and treat the consecration of their priests as a sacrament.

The connection of events naturally brings Synesius before us, a scholar of the celebrated Hypatia, under whom he became a great proficient in the Platonic philosophy. He was a native of the city of Cyrene. His ancestors were traceable, through a long series, from renowned antiquity, as we learn from his own authority; for he records them as far back as to Eurysthenes, the first

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[1] Cyril seems to have been the first in the Christian Church who took upon himself as an individual to pronounce official curses on an opponent. The practice has been well followed out in the Romish Church. Calvin, in his 'Commentary on the Psalms,' asserts that it was a well-known practice in his own day for persons to hire ecclesiastics of the Franciscan order to level the maledictions of Psalm cix. against persons obnoxious to them; and furthermore states it as a fact coming under his own personal knowledge, that a lady of high quality, having a desire to anathematise her only son, took some friars of this order into her pay, to apply these imprecations to the object of her vengeance. The classical reader will be here reminded of the many examples of these official imprecations which may be found in the pages of heathen antiquity. In the 9th Iliad of Homer, Phœnix says that the gods would not permit him to have children by reason of his father's imprecations, and that Meleager was destroyed by the curses of his mother. In the Grecian states notorious criminals were caused to be publicly cursed by the priests, as happened in the case of Alcibiades, against whom it was decreed that he should be cursed by all the priests and priestesses. Nor was the same custom without frequent examples in the history of heathen Rome. When Crassus was proceeding against the Parthians, Ateius, running to the gate of the city, placed there a vessel full of burning coals, upon which he offered incense and libations, and pronounced most direful curses against Crassus as he passed by. We can scarcely, in referring to these instances, pass over that well known Scripture history of Balak and Balaam. In the case of Alcibiades it is said that a certain Athenian priestess could not be induced to curse him, inasmuch as she considered it the office of the priesthood to intercede for men, and not to curse them.

Doric king of Sparta, and the fifth from Hercules; the series having been inscribed in the public registers of Cyrene, which was a Lacedæmonian colony. The date of his nativity is uncertain; but he appears to have resided at Constantinople from 397 to 400, as deputy from his own city, and to have been made Bishop of Ptolemais in 410.

The relation subsisting between Synesius and Hypatia calls upon us for some account of that extraordinary lady, whose lamentable fate presents the period we are contemplating in very dark colours, as a specimen of the defective Christianity of the fourth century.

Hypatia was the daughter of Theon, a celebrated mathematician, under whom she prosecuted with great success the study of the severe sciences. Besides her lectures at Athens and Alexandria, on the geometry of Apollonius and Diophantus, she gave public instructions in both those places in the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle. Her beauty was not less remarkable than the endowments of her mind, and her various gifts and graces, if happily they had been cast in a Christian mould, would have entitled her memory to be cherished as well as admired. Cyril is related to have looked with an eye of great jealousy and hostility upon the growing fame of the female philosopher, and upon the effect of her instructions and attractions in filling her school with an admiring audience of nobles and learned men. His indignation is said to have been inflamed by the idea that her influence was the principal obstacle to a reconciliation between himself and the prefect Orestes. On a day in the season of Lent, Hypatia was assaulted in her chariot, thrown to the ground, stripped of her garments, dragged along the streets, and cruelly and inhumanly mangled and murdered by a ferocious mob, set on by one of the readers of the Church, whose fury the archbishop is said to have made no use of his authority to arrest or mitigate.[1]

A great part of the life of Synesius was spent in secular affairs; and when, in the year 410, he was made Bishop of Ptolemais, that exaltation was unexpected and undesired. He was unwilling to accept the charge, to which he was invited by Theophilus, the Archbishop of Alexandria; and, being not fully persuaded of the truths of the Christian religion, he considered himself to be unqualified for the proffered dignity. Such, however, was the laxity as to essentials in those days, to which many look for models and examples, that, notwithstanding the candid admission by Synesius of the state of his theological convictions, he was urged and induced to become the bishop of Ptolemais; a fact which reminds us of the case of St. Ambrose, who was constrained to accept the archbishopric of Milan, though but newly baptized, and "not having had time to study religion before his ordination."[1]

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[1] [Gibbon observes that the historian Socrates has no more condemnatory epithet for the murderers of Hypatia than that they were "ἄνδρες το φρόνημα ἔνθερμοὶ."—Ed.]

Synesius exercised the important function of bishop of Ptolemais during the space of twenty years, his life having terminated about the same time with that of Augustin. The acts of his ministry bore testimony to the integrity and firmness of his principles. The prognostics of his sensible and judicious, and, we may hope, faithful deportment, were observable in some of the earlier transactions of his life, and especially in the instructive oration which he pronounced when at Constantinople as deputy from Cyrene to the Emperor Arcadius. In this address he exhorted the Emperor to revive the courage and character of his subjects by an example in his own person of manly virtue; to banish luxury from his court; to rouse the lazy citizen from his dreams of pleasure, and to display the spirit of a Roman at the head of his indigenous troops. The letter of Synesius to his brother contains a very interesting exposition of his own private opinions, and throws considerable light upon the philosophical and social habits of his times. A principal portion of it shall therefore be laid before the reader.

*Synesius to his Brother.*

"I should be an insensible man were I not to return many thanks to the people of Ptolemais for deeming me worthy of the honours to which, for my own part, I do not think myself competent. It is my duty to consider, not so much the greatness of the office which is tendered to me, as my ability to discharge its duties. Feeling myself a mere man, to be promoted to honours little less than divine is a distinction which may be very gratifying to one who is fit for the undertaking; but, to one who comes so very far short of what the undertaking demands, a bitter disappointment of his hopes is the only probable result. It is no new fear of mine, but one which I have long entertained, that my receiving honour from man may be an infliction on me for some sin against God; for, upon self-investigation, I find myself unsuited to the gravity of the sacerdotal office. Let me make you acquainted with what is passing in my mind, since to none can I do this so well as to him who was brought up with me, and whom I hold so dear; for I presume to think you will participate in all my cares, and that my attainment of any good, or escape from any evil, is, at all times, the subject of your anxious thoughts. Hear, then, how matters stand with me, though, indeed, you must, for the most part, be already acquainted with them. I have taken upon me the light burthen of philosophy, and seem to myself to have sustained it well; but, having been praised by some as not altogether unsuccessful in this study, I am thought equal to greater things by those who are no good judges of my qualifications. I fear, then, lest, being elated so far as to accept the honour, I should commit a double error; acting as if I thought myself above the profession of philosophy, while I fall far below the demands of the new situation proposed to me. For consider that between these two things I regularly divide my time—amusement and study. When I am studying I am in privacy, especially if engaged in religious exercises; but when I recreate myself I am quite in public. The truth is, as you know, that when I rise from my books, I am wholly given up to recreation; I fear, therefore, I am unfitted, both by nature and by habit, for public cares.

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[1] See Dupin, Cent. iv.

"Now a priest ought to be a holy man—one who should be utterly indisposed to any manner of amusement; one who is garrisoned by ten thousand eyes, that he may live conformably to his profession; which check upon him would avail little or nothing without a fitness in the man himself for what he has undertaken; without a spiritual discernment, and a superiority to all self-indulgence. . . . I well know that some men are equal to all this; as to myself, I feel that I cannot go to and fro in the city without having my affections implicated in things which drag me to the earth, and bring on my soul more defilement than I can express. I feel a deficiency of strength. It is the unsoundness within me that makes me unequal to exterior things. . . . . I declare and profess before all men, that from this wife of mine I will not either entirely live apart, nor cohabit clandestinely with her; for the one would be anything but holy, and the other anything but lawful. My wish and prayer is that I may have a numerous and virtuous offspring. . . . .[1]

"Again, it is difficult, if not wholly impossible, to shake opinions which have established themselves in the mind by demonstrative reasoning: you know that philosophy is in many instances opposed to the commonly received dogmas. I never can persuade myself to think that the soul comes into existence after the body;[2] nor will I be brought to say that the world and other parts of the creation perish together. I think the doctrine of the resurrection, which is publicly preached, is something sacred, and not a fit subject of discourse. I am far from falling in with the opinions of the vulgar; and I think that the philosophical mind, though it is its business to discern the truth, must yield occasionally to the necessity of falsifying. For the interior light bears the same relation to truth, as the natural eye to its objects when its vision is obscured by a film. The spiritual vision requires a film between itself and the truth, as the natural does between itself and the light; inasmuch as the eye would be injured by being exposed to too much brightness. As darkness is beneficial to those who have a defect in the eye, so I think that deception is useful to the people; and that the truth may be hurtful to those who are not strong enough to fix their vision upon objects that are very luminous. If the laws concerning the priesthood will allow these things to me, I could undertake the priesthood. When at home I act the part of a philosopher, but when abroad and teaching, I indulge in fiction. . . . . For the people and philosophy, what have they to do with each other? The truth of Divine things ought not to be spoken out,[1] since the people require a different mode of teaching. Though again and again I repeat that a wise man should neither argue nor be argued with, when there is no necessity for it, yet, when called to the priesthood, I do not deem it right to profess opinions which I do not entertain. . . . . Fond as I am of amusement, insomuch that from my youth I have been blamed for an excessive and immoderate attachment to arms and horses, I should grieve, indeed (for what should I not suffer, to see my favourite dogs unexercised in hunting, and my arrows worm-eaten?), yet will I suffer the martyrdom, if God command it. And as I am one who dislike the cares of business, I shall feel uncomfortable at the change of habits; but I will endure this service of controversy and trouble, burthensome as it is, if I hereby fulfil my duty to God: I will not dissemble my opinions; my mind and tongue shall not be at variance."

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[1] The celibacy of the clergy, though countenanced and regarded as a duty by some of the early Western Councils, as those of Elvira, Arles, and Tours, does not appear to have been generally and scrupulously observed till after the lapse of several centuries. The 33rd Canon of the Council of Elvira, held about the year 300 A.D., enjoined it; and it was decreed by the Council of Arles, in 340, that no man, encumbered with a wife, should be admitted into Holy Orders, unless he engaged to abstain from cohabitation. In the great Council of Nice, 325, Paphnutius, a man of distinguished piety and virtue, who, for his perseverance in the faith, had been deprived of one of his eyes, and was himself unmarried, prevailed to have the proposition, that persons married before ordination should be forbidden to cohabit with their wives, rejected; contending that marriage was honourable, and the conjugal connection consistent with the chastity of the priestly character. This opinion was applauded by the Council, and the matter of celibacy was left to the free choice of the individual. Still, however, towards the close of the fourth century, the clerical abstinence from matrimony was pretty general in the Churches of the West. Syricius, Bishop of Rome, issued a decree, in 385, enjoining celibacy upon all priests and deacons. In 441 the Council of Carthage decreed that those who did not withdraw from their wives should be deposed; and, in two years afterwards, Pope Leo, called the Great, extended the law of celibacy, which had been confined to deacons and presbyters, to sub-deacons. The law was finally confirmed by Gregory, called the Great, in 591. An attempt made in the Council of Trent to set the clergy free from this odious and iniquitous restriction was not attended with success, though it was an article in the Interim of Charles V.

[2] It was a theological question in the primitive ages of the Church, whether the soul was propagated from father to son by the natural course of generation, expressed by the phrase *ex traduce*, or was created, and came into existence after the body. Synesius, as it appears, held the former opinion. Tertullian was of the same opinion—to which also Augustin seemed to incline—with several of the Western Churches. Jerom says the soul was created immediately, at the very instant it was united to the body. 'Comm. on Eccl.,' c. 12, et Ep. 61, ad Pomm. Much time was consumed in these idle and presumptuous questions by those who are called the Fathers of the Church.

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[1] How it came to be a maxim with some of the Fathers—I might almost say, with the Fathers in general—to use an economy and reserve in their communication of divine things, one sees pretty clearly in this important epistle of Synesius. The study of heathen philosophy, to which many of the Fathers and great Christian professors had devoted their early lives, had impressed on their minds that habit of secrecy and reserve which was characteristic of ancient lore, and continued to adhere to the schools even of the fourth century. Synesius had passed the early period of his life in secular employments; and, being nobly born and bred, had received the fullest cultivation which was to be had in his day under the most renowned teachers of popular learning; and such were his qualities and habits when Theophilus, Archbishop of Alexandria, suddenly invited him to the episcopal dignity.

From the epistolary correspondence of Synesius, as well as from the testimonies which history bears to his character, he appears to have been an erudite philosopher and an accomplished gentleman, if not a correct theologian. His mind was on a level with his high descent, and at an equal distance from sacerdotal pride, and ascetic humility. His various avocations appear to have impaired his fortune; yet no consideration of ease could deter him from the frank avowal of opinions that seemed to be, and ought to have been, a bar to his ecclesiastical preferment.

On his elevation, however, to the throne of episcopacy, he was fully alive to the responsibility of the charge, and resolute in the administration of its duties. In the annals of faction and persecution, or the uncharitable strife of controversy, the name of Synesius is nowhere heard. It was only in a contest with crime and cruelty that he wielded the weapons of the sanctuary, and tried the efficacy of its spiritual thunder.

Andronicus, a provincial governor, whose power in Cyrene and Ptolemais had been illegally obtained, had availed himself of it to give full scope to the ferocity of his temper. To an abandoned course of rapine and oppression he had added the guilt of sacrilege; and Synesius, after a fruitless effort to put a stop to his outrages by remonstrance and menace, proceeded to pronounce against him the final sentence of excommunication. The sentence was supported and enforced by imperial edicts, and the culprit was reduced to implore forgiveness and to purchase his pardon by a prostrate humiliation. Thus impelled by the course of events, Synesius, the most eminent among those whose humanity and moderation afforded the best hope of determining and adjusting the unsettled authority of the Church, furnished one of the precedents out of which her usurpations grew, and gradually expanded, till they reached their monstrous maturity in the papal domination.

He had a heart of the truest sympathy and kindness, as appears from many of his epistles, especially those to his brother, to whom he was tenderly attached. Of Hypatia he was an early and devoted scholar, and for her he retained, till the sad catastrophe which terminated her existence, an elegant friendship. So affecting was the last scene of her life, that we follow the pen of Synesius in his converse with her by letter with a feeling of sorrow and sadness. He writes to this accomplished and unhappy lady on the subjects of their common study; and the genius and temperament which in a period of such faction and disorder found solace and refreshment in inquiries so pure and improving, associate the names of Hypatia and Synesius with the images most affecting in the records of the past.

But I am far from asking the reader for an unqualified approbation of this amiable and distinguished man. He was a great admirer, and almost a disciple, of the Pythagorean school; whence he imported those maxims of secrecy and suppression by which it was distinguished. Of the reserve of the Pythagorean mystics in the economy of their arcana, few could reasonably complain, for none probably lost much by it; but reserve or partial concealment in the communication of saving truths is a gross wrong done to humanity. Such a mode of dispensing Christian knowledge is to intercept the beams of the Sun of righteousness; to render darker still the glass through which we see so darkly; and to interpose a veil of human texture between the sinner and the sinner's hope. "Regum mysteria celare fortasse satius est," says Erasmus, "at Christus sua mysteria quam maxime cupit evulgari."

There is, however, good reason to conclude that Synesius, after entering upon the episcopal office, acquired clearer and correcter views of some of those theological points on which his mind had been sceptical and unsettled, as we find him very anxious and active in removing the doubts of a friend on the same subjects; though still it is probable that, like all the luminaries of the Church in the fourth century, especially those who were late converts to Christianity, he failed in that entire reliance on the Saviour's blood, which ascribes to Him, and to no other Name, the solitary work of our redemption.

Among the Greek Fathers of the end of the fourth and beginning of the fifth century, the influence of *Isidore* of Pelusium on the progress of Scriptural truth, and the character of Christianity, was such as to entitle him to special notice in a biographical history of the Church. He had many claims to distinction in his own time; but posterity has been made acquainted with his value principally by his numerous letters, which have earned for him a high reputation as a scholar both in Divinity and in general literature. Sixtus Senensis, in his 'Sacra Bibliotheca,' has made the number of his letters amount to ten thousand, following what appeared to be the statement of Nicephorus, in the fourteenth book of his 'Ecclesiastical History,' but which has, with great probability, been imputed to an error in the use of the Greek numerals, the letter ι being inserted instead of γ. The whole number which has been brought to light is, according to Bellarmine, three thousand one hundred and fourteen; though others say that only two thousand and twelve are to be found.

There have been several distinguished ecclesiastics bearing the name of Isidore; but the Greek Father with whom we are now concerned was a presbyter, or the abbot of a monastery at Pelusium, a city of Egypt, near one of the mouths of the Nile, called the Pelusiacum Ostium. He was a disciple of John Chrysostom, and attracted great veneration by his sanctity and ascetic abstinence. He so macerated his flesh by study, and treasured up so vast a fund of Divine knowledge, that he seemed, says Evagrius, to live an angelic life upon earth. Isidore has quoted from all, or nearly all, the books of the Old and New Testaments, and has thrown upon both considerable light. Dr. Heumann of Göttingen, who wrote a dissertation on the works of this Father, has given it as his opinion that most of Isidore's epistles were fictitious, i. e. not written to real persons, but used as channels for conveying his disquisitions and remarks; and, in Lardner's judgment, Heumann supports his opinion with forcible reasons. The letters are written with great vivacity, and in sound observations and precepts are hardly inferior to any other productions of the fourth and fifth centuries. His matter is always perspicuous, and his meaning never distorted by sophistical or artificial phraseology. His diction is pure and elegant, and may be reckoned among the examples which attest the wonderful durability of the Greek language, and its struggles for life amidst the dying literature of the lower empire.[1] The period from the year 388 to 430 seems to have been that in which Isidore of Pelusium held on his laborious career of learned toil and monastic penance. The epistles of this sensible monk are so short and pleasing, that we will produce three of them, if it be but to illustrate his worth and solidity.

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[1] The Romans, with all their extent of dominion, and all the interest they evinced in the cultivation of their language, were unsuccessful in their endeavours. The Greeks set out before them, and, I might say, survived them in literary longevity. We have many Greek authors of considerable purity and elegance, of a date long after the Latin language had become almost barbarous. There is less dissonance or disagreement between the Greek of the first ages and the last, of the fourth century before and the fourth century after the Christian æra, than there is between two Roman writers at the extreme limits of the same century. We are assured by Cicero that there were authors who lived about the middle epoch between him and the XII. Tables, who confessed they did not understand those Tables. See Tayl. 'Elem. of Civil Law,' 510.

*To Martinianus, Presbyter.*

"Do not, my excellent friend, strive after wealth, which is the parent of pride and arrogance, brings on us a band of destructive pleasures, is the architect and fabricator of every evil, and estranges us from the love of God; but cultivate virtue, which turns us aside from the evils of the world. If it demands of us much sweat and labour, do not avoid it on that account, but embrace it for that very reason. For remember that, in other things, that which is the fruit of sweat and labour,[1] even where it is little in itself, becomes the object of our ardent desire; whereas that which is easily acquired, or comes of its own accord, is despised by us, however great in itself."

*To Peter, Presbyter.*

"Peace, if it is in conjunction with righteousness, is indeed a thing truly divine; but if it be not so allied, it betrays the beauty and perfection of virtue. There is peace among robbers, and peace among wolves; but the peace of robbers is a league against men, and the peace of wolves threatens destruction to the sheep. I would not call that peace which has not the ornament of righteousness. When this is added to it I call it peace. Thus Christ says, 'I came not to bring peace upon earth, but a sword.' Not that He repudiates peace, but the peace that is yoked with evil. In another place He says, 'My peace I give you;' that, therefore, is truly peace which is sanctified by its alliance with righteousness and holiness."

*To Æsculapius, the Sophist.*

"It has quite escaped these Greeks that, by the arguments which they bring against the Christian religion, they confute themselves. They say that the sacred Scriptures are barbarously written, and full of foreign terms and idioms, without the connection and order required in composition, and embarrassing the meaning of what is said by a redundancy of diction. But let these very things teach them the force of truth. For how has it happened that eloquence itself has been persuaded and convinced by this artless and simple dialect? Let the wise say how it is that this language, so full of solecisms and barbarisms, has mastered dogmatic error, with all its advantages of Athenian eloquence. How is it that Plato, that prince and Coryphæus of the Gentile philosophy, could never bring over a single tyrant to his opinions; but this barbarous dialect, so full of solecisms, has spread its conquests over sea and land."

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[1] Τῆς δ' ἀρετῆς ἱδρῶτα θεοὶ προπάροιθεν ἔθηκαν
Αθάνατοι, μακρὸς δὲ καὶ ὄρθιος οἶμος ἐπ' αὐτὴν,
Καὶ τρηχὺς τὸ πρῶτον: κ.τ.λ.
Hesiod. 'Opera et Dies,' 289.

*To Nilus.*

"As the strength and skill of a wrestler [*athleta*] are most conspicuously displayed, when, though locked in the powerful grasp of his adversary, he yet subdues him in the struggle on the stadium; so Christ engages in combat with the demons in the strength of His cross alone, that the trophies of His triumph may be more signal and illustrious; and this is what you wish me to expound. Having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it, i.e. by His cross. Thus in truth were the demons triumphed over by a wrestler transfixed to the cross by his hands and feet. The devil was baffled and worsted by a single arm of flesh, and that flesh suspended on a cross, to which he was compelled to yield the palm of victory."

The reader is presented with these few specimens of the spirit and genius of this amiable Christian Teacher, because he is less known and consulted than he ought to be, and because, in tracing the biographical history of the Church, the Pelusiote has a just claim to appear in the train of its worthies.

The series of Greek Fathers born in the fourth century, whose lives were extended nearly to the middle of the fifth, and who belong to the primitive portion of ecclesiastical history, may, it seems, not unfitly be closed with some account of *Theodoret*, whose 'Ecclesiastical History,' as far as it extends, which is only to the beginning of the Nestorian controversy, has brought to light many events of importance which both Socrates and Sozomen have purposely omitted or suffered to escape them.

Theodoret was born at Antioch, about fourteen years before the termination of the fourth century, and, at seven years of age, was placed in a monastery, at some little distance, for education, where he had for his associates Nestorius and John, of whom the first-named became the patriarch of Constantinople, and the latter was raised to the see of Antioch, in which capacity his name has been much associated with those of Cyril and Nestorius, in their contentions at Ephesus during the sittings of its noisy Council. He appears to have been assisted in his studies by Theodorus, Bishop of Mopsuestia, and Chrysostom, to whom he was principally indebted for his proficiency in theological and general learning. Nor was he less distinguished for his piety, and a behaviour conformable to his name, Theodoretus, given him by his parents as an earnest of those gifts and endowments, by which they trusted his future career would be illustrated. He was made first a reader, and afterwards deacon of the Church of Antioch; and in the year 420 was ordained Bishop of Cyrus, a city on the borders of the river Euphrates, where he is said to have had the charge of eight hundred churches, and where he is recorded to have wrought very efficaciously in the confutation of heresy in every shape. In about eight or nine years after his consecration as bishop, his friend Nestorius began to profess the opinions which drew upon him the hostility of Cyril of Alexandria, and the sentence of the Council of Ephesus, but which Theodoret was little forward to condemn on account of his long attachment to their author. On this ground he was also made to feel the resentment of the Alexandrian patriarch, which lasted as long as they both lived. The Emperor Theodosius the younger sent him from Ephesus with menaces and marks of his displeasure, for having presumed, with other friends of Nestorius, to pass a nominal sentence of deposition upon Cyril; and having, upon the death of that prelate in 444, expressed openly the pleasure which that event gave him, he was confined to his house; but his friends remained devoted to him, and amongst others the Bishop of Rome. He was deposed by the second Synod of Ephesus in 449, and, in the following year, which was the last of Theodosius the younger, he was restored to his see, under his immediate successor. In 451 the fourth œcumenical Council was convened at Chalcedon, at which Theodoret attended, and having made public profession of his orthodoxy, was induced, though, as it seems, with a reluctant submission, to consent to the condemnation of Nestorius. After these vicissitudes, he appears to have committed the active government of his diocese to Hypatius, and to have been unremittingly occupied in his writing and publishing till the year 457, when he died at the age of seventy-one.

Theodoret was a man of considerable ability, knowledge, and candour; and it has been remarked, as an instance of his moderation, that he ended his 'Ecclesiastical History' at the time of the commencement of the Nestorian controversies, in which he was so deeply interested. It is plain, however, that he could not have entered upon that ground without exhibiting some varieties in his own conduct for which it might not have been easy to apologise.

He was too fond of monks and too devoted an admirer of ascetic heroism to receive with the caution of a scrupulous historian the miraculous narratives which poisoned the literature and theology of that age, and which tasked to the uttermost the digestive powers of a voracious credulity. He was, however, a learned and diligent writer, and, in his dialogues against the prevailing heresies, has displayed argumentative exactness and no inconsiderable knowledge of the sacred writings. Neither the errors of Pelagius nor the fancies of Origen attracted his censures, and he has even been suspected of entertaining some opinions bordering upon the Pelagian heresy, among which may be reckoned the sinless state of babyhood.[1] Theodoret has given an interesting account of himself in one of his epistles, which is to the following effect: "My parents, before my birth, made a vow to God to consecrate me to His service, and they gave me an education agreeable to that promise. After passing my first days in a monastery, I was ordained bishop against my inclination. For twenty-five years I have so lived in that station as never to prosecute or be prosecuted at law. The same I can say of all the pious clergy who are under my inspection, none of whom were ever seen in any court of justice. Neither I nor my domestics ever received the smallest present from any person, not even a loaf or an egg. My patrimony I gave away long ago to the poor, and I have made no new acquisitions. I have neither house, nor land, nor money, nor a sepulchre where my friends may lay my body when I die. I am the possessor of nothing save the poor raiment which I wear. Out of the ecclesiastical revenues I have built porticos, and two very large bridges, and have put the public baths in good condition. I found the city without water, and the inhabitants obliged to go to the river to fetch it. I built them an aqueduct which supplies them plentifully. I found eight villages infected with the heresy of the Marcionites; I have converted them all, yet not without incurring much danger, having been often assaulted and reduced to death's door."[1]

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[1] He must have been strong, however, in the principles of right reasoning, and worthy of great respect for the candour and solidity of his judgment, who could write thus: "Blind faith is the source of all the evils and errors of the Church. Of all heresies the worst and most dangerous is that which in our days lifts its head so high, namely, that which, exacting from man, with as much absurdity as injustice, that he should give up his own intelligence, and receive his religion without examination, prevents him from ever arriving at a living and constant faith."

That Theodoret had made himself extremely poor is shown by other proofs as well as his own testimony above produced. When a message was brought to him from the Emperor Theodosius the younger, threatening him with deposition and privations unless he took part against Nestorius, he is said to have derided the menace, as having nothing to lose except his garment, and trusting that some friend would give him another to prevent his going naked. He was really a virtuous man, and, amongst his many good qualities, one feels a regret in ascribing to him the same laxity of sentiment which, in the account we have given of Eusebius, appears to have been characteristic of that historian, and is observable in many of the early Christians, and which reconciled them to the practice of disguising the truth in favonr of those who professed opinions conformable to their own. But after these and some other deductions from the merit of Theodoret as an historian and a man, his works must be regarded as among the best and most authentic productions of the age in which he flourished. His 'Ecclesiastical History,' in five books, which may be read as a continuation of Eusebius, from A.D. 320 to A.D. 427, is very creditable to his powers and industry, being written in a style very suitable to the dignity and plainness of history. We have also his 'Philotheus,' or 'Historia Religiosa,' consisting of eulogies on certain monks, and one hundred and forty-six epistles. He has left us also four dialogues entitled

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[1] Epist. 81–113, ad Leonem.

'Eranistes,' or 'Polymorphus,' a polemic treatise on the Person of Christ, an account of ancient heresies, ten orations against the Gentiles, an apology for Christianity in twelve books, and some sermons and dialogues against the Arians, Macedonians, and Apollinarians.[1]

Of Theodorus, Bishop of Mopsuestia, Theodoret was an admirer and friend. He was indebted to him for his first instruction, and wrote in his defence. Of that voluminous writer we have very scanty remains, though his commentaries extended over the whole of the sacred Scriptures, and his polemic productions were opposed to the whole array of Arians, Eunomians, Apollinarians, and the varied host of the heretics of the East. He was born and bred at Antioch, where he was a presbyter at the same time with Chrysostom, and had for his pupils John, afterwards the patriarch of that see, together with Theodoret and Nestorius. In the year 392 he was made Bishop of Mopsuestia in Cilicia, in which station he continued for thirty-six years to execute with great diligence his important duties. After his death, which happened in 428, he was accused of being in his creed inclined to the opinions of Nestorius, and was pronounced a heretic at the fifth General Council at Constantinople, A.D. 553. His 'Expositio Fidei,' with copious extracts from many of his other works, are found in the acts of the fifth General Council,[2] in the works of Marius Mercator, and in the 'Catenæ Patrum.'

Having brought our account of those eminent men to whom, under the denomination of Greek Fathers of the Church, we ascribe the principal human agency in the control of its affairs, and the guidance of its procedure throughout its eastern limits to the middle of the fifth century, we will now turn our attention to those who have held the same distinguished course in the western communions from the early part of the fourth century to the same point of time, being the epoch of the famous fourth œcumenical Council, held at Chalcedon, and the exaltation of the Bishop of Rome in the person of Leo the Great.

No champion of the faith in the western world has been more the boast of Christendom in the fourth century than Ambrose,

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[1] All the works of Theodoret were edited by the Jesuit Jac. Sirmond. Paris, 1642. And the whole of his works, Greek and Latin, with notes, were republished by J. L. Schulze. Halle, 1768.

[2] Apud Harduin, tom. III.

Archbishop of Milan, for the sanctity, dignity, and decisiveness of his character. This venerable man was born, as reputed, at Arles in France, the chief city of Gallia Narbonensis, the seat of the imperial viceroys, and on account of its size and importance often called Roma Gallica. He was of high birth; his father, whose name was also Ambrosius, being the prefect of the province of Gaul. His birth is usually assigned to the year of our Lord 333. I pass over the childish and silly incidents which have been narrated as attendant upon his infancy, the illusions or deceptions of superstition or fraud, with which all periods of early Church history, and especially the fourth century, have been overrun and disgraced, and place this celebrated Father at once before the reader in the maturity of his years, possessed of general learning, of consular dignity, and, from a renowned pleader in the Forum, advanced by his patron, Anicius Probus, to be governor of a great part of Gallia Cisalpina. Thus promoted, he made Milan the place of his residence, where he continued five years in the administration of his high office, distinguished by his probity and prudence, at the end of which time Auxentius, the Archbishop of Milan, died, leaving the see disburthened of a decided supporter of the Arian cause. The Emperor being requested by the bishops of the provinces to name a successor to Auxentius, declined that exercise of his authority, and committed the appointment to the bishops themselves.

A tumult was excited on the day of election by the Arians in behalf of one of their own party, which called for the interference of Ambrose in his official capacity. On this occasion, as prefect of Italy, he made a grave oration to the crowd assembled in the church, exhorting them to observe a peaceful behaviour; and hardly had he finished, when a voice from the multitude, like that of a child, was heard to exclaim, "*Ambrose is bishop!*" which seemed, to ears not ill-disposed to the miraculous intimation, to come from above. This was received as an authoritative revelation, and, with one acclaim, Ambrose was declared to be destined to the high office by an indubitable proof of the will of Heaven. We are next to credit as we can the account transmitted to us of the reluctance of Ambrose to accept the miraculous appointment, and of his retreat into the country, where he was lodged in the house of one Laurentius, his friend, till, a proclamation being made that anyone concealing the fugitive would do it at the peril of his life, he was brought back to Milan, where he was obliged to yield to the imperial mandate, or rather to what had been so satisfactorily shown to be the command of an invisible and irresistible power. In a short week Ambrose was baptized, consecrated, and invested with the charge of the see of Milan. The event took place A.D. 374, and if his ordination was not strictly canonical, the acclamation of the people, the approval of the bishops, and the command of Valentinian, all grounded on a miracle, sanctified at once the man and his vocation.

One of the first acts of the new archbishop was to dispose of his entire property ; the care of his domestic affairs being committed to his brother Satyrus, and his lands being settled on the Church after the death of his sister Marcellina, while all his money and goods were, by an immediate gift, bestowed upon the poor.

To complete his theological studies (for, though he had been carefully instructed in the learning of a scholar, he was but little acquainted with the doctrines and controversies of the Church when he entered upon his great office[1]), he placed himself under the tuition of Simplician, a presbyter at Rome, who, both by his learning and piety, was considered as well qualified for this undertaking. His three books, 'De Virginibus,' which he dedicated to his sister, his commentary on St. Luke, and his three books of Offices, written in imitation of Cicero, were the earliest fruits of this new direction of his studies.

The death of Valentinian took place in 375, about a year after the succession of Ambrose to the see of Milan. Gratian succeeded and reigned till 383, during which period Ambrose exercised the duties of his high station in the full enjoyment of the friendship of that estimable prince, interrupted only by the incursions of the barbarous invaders, who, having spread their devastation over the north of Italy, compelled him for a short period to take refuge in Illyricum.

On the death of Gratian (August 25, 383), the imperial authority devolved upon the younger Valentinian, under the guardianship of his mother, the Empress Justina. Maximus was then at Trèves, at the head of his insurrectionary and triumphant forces, and to him the Archbishop of Milan was sent, in both a spiritual and political character, to negotiate a cessation of hostilities, and to secure, if possible, the peace of Italy. This important mission was executed by Ambrose with fidelity, prudence, and courage. But a more trying demand for his fortitude and discretion awaited him in his own province of Milan, where he refused to concede the use of a single church to the Arian worshippers, though requested so to do by the Empress, who had zealously adopted that heresy, and was resolved to protect it throughout the dominions of her son. But to surrender this point was considered by Ambrose to be entirely inconsistent with his duty. He refused, and the Empress insisted. The city was thrown into confusion between the partisans of the Court and the Church, and the Archbishop was often of necessity called upon to restrain and appease the multitude by his influence and authority. The people were on his side, and would listen only to his interposition.

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[1] "Unusenim verus Magister erat, qui solus non didicit quod omnes doceret ; homines autem discunt prius quod doceant, et ab illo accipiunt quod aliis tradant. Quod ne ipsum quidem mihi accidit. Ego autem raptus de tribunalibus, atque administrationis infulis, ad Sacerdotium, docere vos cœpi quod ipse non didici. Discendum igitur mihi simul et docendum est ; quoniam non vacavit ante discere."—Ambros. 'De Officiis Minist.' I. c. I.

While this contest—the magistracy and military being on one side, and the Archbishop and people on the other—was threatening the peace of the empire, victory was decided by the following incident: Ambrose was called upon to consecrate and dedicate a church which had been lately built at Milan, to which he consented provided some remains of martyrs could be found which might be buried under the altar, an ingredient in the ceremony then considered as very important. In a vision or a dream, a place was indicated to the Archbishop where the remains of two martyrs lay buried near the tombs of two other saints, St. Felix and St. Nabor. Search was accordingly made, and, in the place thus infallibly ascertained, two tall skeletons were found. These were the relics of St. Protasius and St. Gervasius, of whom the former had been beheaded, and the latter whipped to death with plumbatæ, or scourges with leaden bullets at the end of them. There was also a copious effusion of blood in the coffins, although the bodies had been under the ground for more than three hundred years!

Great was the impatience of the people to see these relics, and the curiosity of the crowd was abundantly gratified by the miracles which succeeded to this important discovery. A blind man, whose name was Severus (so particular is the account given by Paulinus in his life of Ambrose), had but to touch with his handkerchief the bones of the saints and to wipe his eyes with it, to be restored to perfect vision. Many who were tormented with evil spirits were in a moment set free from their annoyance by contact with these skeletons ; while others, by touching the cloths in which the bones had been wrapped, were cured of their diseases.[1]

The extraordinary virtues of these precious bones were denied and ridiculed by the Arians, but confidently affirmed by Ambrose himself and by Paulinus his secretary. And it certainly appears that these representations, which many sincere and devout Christians would be constrained to regard with suspicion, and perhaps to consider as theatrical, were contrived and exhibited by the special authority of the great Archbishop. The event, whatever was its true character, was the prelude of victory to Ambrose, whose cause was thus supernaturally vindicated. Secular and imperial authority bowed to the dictates of sacerdotal ascendency, and the imperial sceptre might envy the security of the saint on his spiritual throne.

Valentinian II. was delivered from the usurpation of Maximus by the successful arms of Theodosius, and the execution of the usurper at Aquileia ; but was, soon after, strangled in his palace at the instigation of his rebellious general, the Count Arbogastes. These events were succeeded by the victory of Theodosius obtained over Eugenius, whom Arbogastes had prompted to contend for the vacant throne of the West. This victory was confirmed by the execution of Eugenius and the self-destruction of Arbogastes, and Theodosius, distinguished by the title of Great, became the undisputed Sovereign of the Roman world. In this plenitude of power, the Emperor resided some time at Milan, where he fell sick, and, after frequent communion with Ambrose till the hour of his departure, committing to him the concerns of the Church, and settling the imperial dignity upon his two sons, Arcadius and Honorius, he died on the 17th of January in the year 395 of the Christian æra. His funeral was solemnised at Milan, where Ambrose pronounced a laboured panegyrical oration on the actions of his memorable life.

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[1] [Augustin was a firm believer in these wonders. He ushers in his mention of them in these words : "Tunc memorato antistiti tuo per visum aperuisti quo loco laterent martyrum corpora Gervasii et Protasii, quæ, per tot annos, incorrupta in thesauro secreti tui recondideras, unde opportune promeres, ad coercendam rabiem femineam, sed regiam." He then proceeds to the miracles wrought by the relics. See 'Confess.' lib. IX. c. 7. Yet, with no little inconsistency, in a passage of his book 'De Unitate Ecclesiæ,' c. 16, he expresses himself thus : "Removeantur ista, vel figmenta mendacium hominum, vel portenta fallacium spirituum. Aut enim non sunt vera, quæ dicuntur ; aut si hæreticorum aliqua facta sunt, magis cavere debemus ; quòd cum dixisset quosdam futuros esse fallaces qui, nonnulla signa faciendo, etiam electos, si fieri posset, fallerent, adjecit vehementer commendans, et ait, Ecce prædixi vobis." Quoted by Whittaker, 'De Ecclesia,' p. 450.—ED.]

Shortly after the death of Theodosius, the fame of Ambrose extended so far upon the earth that Fritigil, Queen of the Marcomanni, requested him by letter to instruct her in the Christian faith, to which he wrote in answer an epistle in the catechistical form. Upon this she appears to have come to Milan to enjoy a personal conference with the Archbishop; but before her object could be obtained his last hour was approaching. Paulinus, his secretary, thus relates the manner of his departure.[1] The Archbishop was dictating to him an exposition of the twenty-third psalm; on a sudden, with the pen in his hand, he turned his eyes, as he tells us, towards Ambrose, and was greatly surprised at seeing a circle of fire, like a shield, round his head, which by degrees entered into his mouth, upon which his countenance glistened like snow, but in a little time returned to its former complexion. He adds that this was the last time the Archbishop dictated anything to him, which was the reason why that exposition remained imperfect.

On the day on which he died, if we are to follow the biographer's strange narrative, he lay several hours with his arms stretched out in the form of a cross, and with his lips continually in motion, though none could collect his words. Honoratus, Bishop of Vercellæ, being on his bed in an upper chamber, heard a voice saying, "Make haste, for he is about to depart," who thereupon came down and gave him the Holy Eucharist; after receiving which he yielded up his spirit on the 4th of April in the year of Christ 397.

Thus was withdrawn from among men this great doctor of the Latin Church, a person, without doubt, possessed of many eminent qualities, but so largely partaking of the vain credulity and superstition of the time, and so frequently the subject of fabricated tales and impostures, that the true lines of his character are hardly to be accurately traced through the misty medium in which he was involved. The efforts which have been made to enlarge the dimensions of the figure have obscured its real proportions, and present him to us a great personage indeed, but with an imposing extravagance of effect. Among the latest miracles ascribed to him, we learn that, after the death of the Emperor Theodosius, a servant of the Count Stilicho, for some ill acts done by him, was by Ambrose delivered over to Satan, upon which an evil spirit immediately seized upon him and tormented him, to the great amazement and terror of the beholders. And after this we find the Father himself departing out of life with a pompous retinue of fictitious wonders. Still, he stands before us a man possessed of qualities bordering on heroism, invincibly firm, and on a level with the great crises in which his vigour and capacity were put to severe trial.

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[1] [Milner regards this biography as not the genuine production of Paulinus. It is "so stuffed," he observes, "with fables that I scarcely know how to quote it."—Ed.]

Among the instances last alluded to, his contention with the Emperor Theodosius on the promiscuous massacre of a large portion of the inhabitants of Thessalonica is the most remarkable. The people of that city had murdered, in a furious assault upon the garrison, Botheric, the Emperor's general, and some of the principal officers, in revenge for the imprisonment of a favourite who was a promoter of their amusements on the racecourse, and whose liberation had been demanded and refused. The refusal was justified by the crime of the prisoner, and the outrage committed by the multitude was characterised by great brutality. The mind of the Emperor was filled with indignation and horror by the recital of the atrocity, nor could his impatient temper abide the forms of judicial inquiry. He hastily resolved that the blood of his lieutenant should be expiated by the blood of the guilty population.

The messengers of death were despatched, and it is said that the Emperor repented of his decree when it was too late to recall them. The massacre of many thousands of the people in the area of the circus, into which they were drawn to witness the games, by the officers of the Emperor, and by his especial order, was doubtless a stain upon the character of a Christian Emperor of the deepest dye. But the stipulated penance enjoined by Ambrose, and the conditions of pardon, propounded, limited, and mitigated by the authority and concession of a human dispenser of punishment and forgiveness to the soul of the culprit, present to the view of the believer, whose ultimate hope and dependence rest upon God only through Jesus Christ, no legitimate or satisfactory exposition of the methods of divine mercy.

After a few months of humiliation (the canonical period of penance having been reduced by sacerdotal authority in favour of this special penitent), in which the imperial homicide, stripped of his purple and other ensigns of royalty, in the sanctuary of Milan, in a suppliant posture, implored with sighs and tears the pardon of his sins, Theodosius was restored to communion with the Church.

The victory of Ambrose was complete, and no doubt priestly domination has owed much to the precedent. Were it clear that conscience and conviction were the true springs and motives in this transaction, it might be numbered among the edifying events of history. But Ambrose well knew his man, and probably had no fear for his own safety. Regard to the soul of his prince, it is but just to suppose, had an influence on his mind ; but it can hardly be denied that the aim of an ambitious mind, and the principles of a worldly policy, might have suggested the course adopted by the Archbishop. The proceedings, however, had all the ostensible marks of magnanimity, and being on the side of humanity and in opposition to power, it does not become us, at this distance of time, to question the uprightness of his motives.

The many miracles which owed their acceptance in the world to the name and credit of Ambrose bring either his integrity or perspicacity under suspicion, unless we are disposed at once to believe them to have been really performed ; if so, we must suffer our reason to be swamped by the multitude of similar inventions which, with equal claims to belief, are gathered round almost every saint and martyr of Christian antiquity, and especially those of the fourth and fifth centuries.

In treating of the miracles attending the discovery of the relics of Protasius and Gervasius, it is difficult to speak in language sufficiently reverent respecting the part performed by Ambrose himself in that religious drama. We could wish, if possible, to charge such practices or delusions upon the times in which the espousers and promoters of them lived, rather than on their own heads ; but then we should forget that those were the men who gave this character to the times to which we should be turning for their apology. If we say that in this affair of the relics Ambrose was deceived by his enthusiasm, we cannot but see that, as the miracle answered the two objects of providing for the dedication of the church and of confuting the Arians with the Empress at their head, there was an expediency in the case which is not often in the contemplation of the enthusiast. If the discovery of the bones was a real miracle, one cannot but remark that it occurred most seasonably for the good Archbishop to terminate a contest pregnant with disaster. The degree in which Ambrose was involved in the equivocal transaction of the consecrated bones will best appear from a part of his letter to his sister.[1]

"As I am accustomed to make you acquainted with everything which passes here during your absence, you must know that we have even made a discovery of holy martyrs. For when I was in the act of dedicating a church, many began to interrupt me, crying, as with one voice, 'Dedicate it as you dedicate a Roman church.' I answered, 'I will do so, if I can discover the relics of martyrs,' and immediately there arose an ardour that seemed a kind of presage of what followed. Why should I multiply words? The Lord bestowed favour upon us. Even the clergy trembled as they were clearing away the earth from the spot which is before the shrines of St. Felix and St. Nabor. I found the signs looked for. When those also came to help on whom I was to lay my hands, the holy martyrs began to be discernible." These holy martyrs were Gervasius and Protasius, "whom we found," as he proceeds to say, "men of astonishing stature, such as a former age produced.[1] All the bones were entire, and near them was a quantity of blood. Great was the concourse of people for two days together. What need of more? We embalmed the whole remains in the regular manner. On the approach of evening we transferred them to the church of Fausta. There vigils were kept up during the whole night long, and the laying-on of hands. On the following day we transferred them to the church which they now call the 'Ambrosian.' Whilst we were in the act of doing this, a blind man was restored to sight."

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[1] In the fourth century the accumulation of miraculous tales and legends, and especially of the wonders wrought by relics, was swelled to an enormous amount, and was collected, accredited, and confirmed by many of the most eminent Fathers of the Church by whom that age was distinguished. Jerom wrote the life of Hilarion, in which full credit is given to the extraordinary narratives of that hermit saint; as well as to the strange stories of Paul and Malchus. Gregory of Nyssa was an implicit believer in the miracles attributed to Gregory of Neocæsarea, usually called Thaumaturgus; and the great Basil has given us his character in terms which leave no doubt of his full acceptance of all the wonders related of him by Gregory Nyssensis, his brother. The miracles ascribed to the relics of St. Babylas have Chrysostom for their zealous advocate.

I do not pronounce upon the credibility of these miracles, but I would observe that Dr. Dodwell, as well as Dr. Church, in their defence of the primitive miracles, appear to have given up those resting on the authorities of the fourth and fifth centuries; and Mr. Dodwell, the father, in speaking of the life of Gregory of Neocæsarea, by Gregory of Nyssa, observes that "in the life of the wonder-worker there are many things which breathe the air of imposture, and the genius of the fourth century." See Dodw. 'Dissert. Iren.' quoted by Dr. Middleton, 'Free Inq.' 128–29. If the pious Gregory of Nyssa allowed himself to be the propagator of spurious miracles, we may well be cautious in listening to others of the same period. Mr. Dodwell gives his assent only to miracles down to the period of the establishment of Christianity by human laws, being of opinion that many things concurred to recommend the miracles of the early ages, which give no countenance to those of the succeeding ages. Of the miracles of the fourth and fifth centuries, I may venture to add that those imputed to the relics of saints and martyrs require the strongest attestations to induce belief.

The Archbishop next relates to his sister the substance of the discourse which he then held to the people assembled to witness the marvellous phenomena, in which the following passage is found:—

"Truly it is not without reason that most men call this the resurrection of the martyrs. Let us see whether the martyrs have risen to themselves; certainly they have done so to us. You knew it when you saw, your own selves, many persons cleansed from evil spirits. A great number, too, when they touched with their hands the raiment of the saints, were freed from those sicknesses under which they laboured. You perceive the miracles of the old time revived, when, on the advent of the Lord Jesus, a greater measure of grace diffused itself over the earth. How many handkerchiefs are spread before us in triumph! how many garments, which have acquired a healing virtue by merely touching these most holy relics, are eagerly claimed! Everyone is glad to touch the utmost border of the place, and he who has touched it is made whole. Thanks to Thee, Lord Jesus, that at this time Thou hast aroused such spirits of the sacred martyrs when Thy Church stands in need of greater help.[2] All men may know what sort of champions I require—those who are able to fight for us, and who never fight against us. Such I have acquired for you, holy people—those who can profit all, and will hurt no one. Such defenders I am courting.[1] Such soldiers I have; not soldiers of the world, but soldiers of Christ. No envy do I apprehend from such as these, whose patronage, as it is higher, so is it safer than any other.

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[1] "Invenimus miræ magnitudinis viros duos, ut prisca ætas ferebat."

[2] Alluding to the Empress Justina.

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[1] This sentence, say the Benedictine editors, was ordered by Charlemagne to be inscribed upon a banner, embellished with the figures of Gervasius and Protasius, and carried in procession for the sake of averting a plague. But let us hear rather the sagacious Mede. "Thus the relics of martyrs, beginning to be esteemed above the richest jewels for the supposed virtue even of the very air of them, were wonderfully sought after, as some divine elixir, sovereign both to body and soul. Whereupon another scene of wonders entered, even of visions and revelations, wonderful and admirable for the discovery of the sepulchres and ashes of martyrs which were quite forgotten, yea, of some whose names and memories till then no man had ever heard of, as St. Ambrose's Gervasius and Protasius. Thus in every corner of the Christian world were new martyrs' bones ever and anon discovered, whose verity again miraculous effects and cures seemed to approve; and therefore were diversely dispersed and gloriously templed and enshrined."—Mede, 'Apost. of Latter Times,' p. 121.

"Babylas's bones were the first," says Mede in the work last quoted, "that all my search can find, which charmed the devil of Daphne, Apollo Daphnæus, when Julian the Apostate offered so many sacrifices to make him speak, and being asked why he was so mute, forsooth, the corpse of Babylas, the martyr, buried near the temple of Daphne, stopped his windpipe."—Ibid. p. 122.

Gallus, the brother of the Emperor Julian, took up the body of the martyr, St. Babylas, and sent it from Antioch to Daphne; which he did by inspiration, said Chrysostom de Babyla. Gallus is said to have been disturbed by nightly apparitions, and the legend runs that Babylas upon this occasion put the devil to flight, and silenced the oracle of Apollo Daphnæus. Julian sent the martyr back to his original grave, from whence he was again removed: "for in those days," says Jortin, "the bones of a martyr had as little rest as a dog in a wheel." The truth seems to be that these sepulchral wonders were among the novelties introduced by the ecclesiastical writers of the fourth century. Chrysostom, from whom one feels pain in quoting anything that sincerity cannot approve, thus expresses himself on the subject of Babylas's relics: *εἰ τὶς ἀπιστεῖ τοῖς ὑπὸ τῶν Ἀποστόλων γεγενημένοις, τὰ παρόντα θεωρῶν παυέσθω τῆς ἀναισχυντίας.* "If any believes not the things which were done by the Apostles, let him now, beholding the present, desist from his shameless perversity." And see what is said by Augustin on this subject, 'De Civit. Dei,' lib. XXII. c. 8. They, as well as Ambrose, consider the miracles done by the relics of Babylas, Gervasius, and Protasius, as renewals of what had long ceased to be; and Mede seems very correctly to have argued from the silence of former ages, that these sepulchral wonders were the proper boasts of the commencement of the fourth century. They found a father also in Jerom. His zeal on their behalf exploded in fierce invectives against Vigilantius, who could not be brought to respect these tales of wonder, to which so many men of reputed wisdom and undoubted sanctity gave credence, either from motives of pious policy, or honestly surrendering their judgment. This heresy, as it was termed, of Vigilantius, does not appear to have gained much ground, being overcome by the vehement opposition it excited. "It slept," says Jortin, "till the Reformation awakened it." And since then all Protestants, who have not renounced common sense, are of the same opinion about these things with Vigilantius.

I wish such guards as these to those very persons who grudge them to me; let them come, then, and see my body-guard. With such guards as these I do not deny that I am surrounded. 'Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; but we will be magnified in the Name of the Lord our God.'

"The Lord hath opened our eyes; we have seen the auxiliaries by which we have been defended. We did not see those allies, yet we had them. Therefore, whilst we were trembling, just as if the Lord had said, 'See what great martyrs I have given you,' so 'with opened eyes we behold the glory of the Lord,' which is past in respect of the sufferings of the martyrs, but present in the wondrous works which they perform. We have escaped, my brethren, from no small burden of disgrace—the disgrace of having patrons without knowing them.

"Noble relics are brought up from an ignoble sepulchre; trophies are displayed to heaven. The tomb is wet with blood; the marks of the victorious gore appear to us. The inviolate relics are discovered in their proper place and order; the head torn from the shoulders. The old men now repeat to us that they heard formerly the names of these martyrs, and read the inscription. The city had lost its own martyrs; the city which had carried away others. Although this is the gift of God to us all, yet I cannot deny the special regard the Lord Jesus has paid to my episcopate; and as I am not worthy to be myself a martyr, I have acquired these martyrs for you. Let the triumphal victims advance into the place where Christ is the victim.[1] He is *upon* the altar who suffered for all; they under the altar who were redeemed by His Passion. This place I had designed for myself; for it is befitting that the priest should lie where he has been wont to offer. But I yield the right side to the sacred victims. This place was due to the martyrs. Let us, then, bury the very sacred relics, and carry them to dwellings worthy of them, and let us solemnise the whole day by sincere devotion."

Who that holds in reverence the memory of Ambrose would not wish that his name had never been associated with this transaction, to which I will leave the reader to apply such descriptive terms as he may deem most appropriate. There can hardly be more than one opinion of the merits of the harangue, from which the above passages are taken. As a specimen of oratory, it is upon a level with the story itself. How shall we account for the part sustained by this eminent person in this strange drama? Shall we impute it to excess of credulity, or shall we place it among the most flagrant specimens of that licence of concealment and fraud reputed pious, sanctioned under the name of *οἰκονομία*, or *φενακισμὸς*, among the early oracles of the Church? Still the name of Ambrose has been transmitted to us as entitled to our veneration, for the support it has lent to the cause of orthodoxy. He has always been regarded as one of the pillars of a pure faith, though not exempt from the puerilities and hallucinations by which the age was characterised. Augustin, who received baptism at his hands, and his early lessons from his lips, and was his great admirer and follower, has spoken of the matter and manner of his teaching, in language peculiar, and not easy to be translated: "Ejus eloquia strenue ministrant adipem frumenti divini, et lætitiam olei, et *sobriam vini ebrietatem*."[1]

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[1] Hostia. The note of the Benedictines on this place is curious. "Quid hoc loco expressius ad veram et corporalem Christi in altari sacro præsentiam probandam dici possit, sane non videmus. Omnia illius verba perpendant sectarii, et si quid iis insit sinceritatis ac bonæ fidei, rem fatebuntur."

Though some of his opinions and interpretations were luxuriant and fanciful, and not of the safest tendency, his moral and social character was amiable and exemplary. The play upon his name by Erasmus was in many respects supported by the tenor of his conversation among men, no less than by the correctness of his great doctrines. "Ambrosius," says Erasmus, "doth truly, according to his name, flow with heavenly ambrosia; he is worthy of his title, i.e. immortal, not with Christ only, but also among men."

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[1] In his discourse on the cxviii. psalm some strange notions occur respecting a baptism by fire at the end of the world. "Quando per caminum ignis iniquitas exuretur;" in which imagination he appears to have followed Hilary. In his books, 'De Virginitate,' 'De Institutione Virginis,' and his 'Exhortatio Virginitatis,' the estate of matrimony is placed in a light for which he has no warrant in Holy Scripture, or foundation in human experience. Some opinions, too, of a peculiar character seem to have been entertained by this Father on the subject of adultery, which cannot be commended for their soundness, safety, or sobriety, and which may serve as an exposition of the phrase used by Augustin in characterising his eloquence, "Sobriam vini ebrietatem." In his treatise, consisting of three books, 'On the Offices of Ministers,' he has imitated the plan of Cicero's 'Offices,' substituting the duties of Christian obligation for the precepts of heathen morality. Of which work Augustin says, in a letter to Jerom, "Nisi forte nomen te movet, quia non tam usitatum est in ecclesiasticis libris, vocabulum officii, quod Ambrosius noster non timuit, qui suos quosdam libros utilium præceptionum plenos, De Officiis voluit appellare."—Epist. xix.

In piety, charity, and humanity, he was surpassed by few within the Christian pale. His eloquence was always devoted to the purposes of kindness, virtue, and justice. Of truth, eternal truth, he was a fearless assertor; save that his addiction to Origen made him a partaker of some of his less dangerous aberrations. This appears principally in his expositions of Scripture, which have often the sickly hue of allegory and enigma.[1] His general learning does not seem to have been either deep or extensive, and his theology was in some particulars vague and confused. But in holy affections, zeal, charity, pastoral labour, and care for the Church, he was a bright example to the age in which he lived; and he has bequeathed, together with that example, very just and valuable delineations of practical morality to succeeding ages.

In respect of his behaviour and personal bearing towards the Emperor Theodosius, at the guilty crisis of his reign, above noticed, though, on the whole, the conduct of Ambrose was great in character and effect, it was not without a stain of prelatical presumption and self-homage, little consistent with sanctified affections. He who sees in his dictation, and remission of the amount of formal contrition to be exercised by Theodosius, no usurpation of arbitrary authority, must entertain very high ideas of sacerdotal privileges; he who perceives no danger or mistake in the reliance which in this instance was placed on the virtue of penance and self-castigation, must solace himself with very secondary grounds of pardon and acceptance; and he who considers the charge of pride and arrogance to be refuted by an outward carriage of holiness and humility, must be but little observant of the pliant policy of ambition, and have but a slight acquaintance with the treachery and deceivableness of the heart inflated by homage and unexercised by disappointment.

In no action of his life was Ambrose displayed in greater lustre before men than in his contest with Symmachus, on the eve of the final triumph of Christianity over the polluted system of heathen idolatry throughout the Roman world. Symmachus at this period was not only a man of reputation for knowledge and learning, but was possessed of great influence as a senator, pontiff, and augur, to which were added the dignity of proconsul of Africa, and prefect of the city. Ambrose, therefore, when he took the field against him in this great and final contention between long-established error and incipient truth, was engaged in no easy undertaking. The Christians were not the majority at this time in the Senate, and its decrees, pagan as they were, had still the stamp of legal authority. It was resolved that great efforts should be made to restore the ancient constitution, and with it the freedom of former times. Four deputations were voted to the imperial court, to represent the grievances of the priesthood and the Senate, and to solicit, as the most decisive indication of a return to the ancient grandeur, the restoration of the altar of Victory.

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[1] [Jerom appears to have entertained no very high opinion of his ability as a commentator upon Scripture. His commentary upon Luke he characterises as *nugas*, and applies to him the not very respectful epithets of "*corvus*" and "*cornicula*." — See Jewel's 'Works,' vol. III. p. 176 (P. S. ed.).—ED.]

Symmachus was entrusted with the prosecution of this important object. He was inflamed with zeal in the cause of expiring paganism, and seemed to be eminently qualified for the task. His petition to the Emperor Valentinian is extant, in which every argument was used to seduce the imagination of the young prince by a gorgeous display of the attributes of the Goddess of Victory. The celestial genius who presided over the fates of the city is introduced by the orator to plead its own cause before the imperial tribunal. The calamities of the empire were imputed to the religion of Christ and Constantine, and the fears of the people were enlisted on the side of custom, history, and experience.

But the hopes of Symmachus and all his expedients were repeatedly baffled by the firm and dextrous opposition of Ambrose, who effectually answered all the advocates of heathen Rome. In this controversy the saint condescended to speak the language of the philosopher, and to ask, with ironical contempt, why it should be thought necessary to introduce an imaginary and invisible power as the cause of those victories, which were sufficiently explained by the valour and discipline of the legions. He derides the absurd reverence for antiquity, which could only tend to discourage the improvements of art, and to replunge the human race into their original barbarism. From thence, gradually rising to a more lofty and theological tone, he pronounces Christianity alone to contain the doctrines of truth and salvation, and that every form of polytheism conducts its deluded votaries through the paths of error to eternal perdition. At a full meeting of the Senate of Rome the Emperor propounded the great question, "Shall the worship of Jupiter, or that of Christ, be the religion of the Romans?" Christianity triumphed. By the suffrages of a large majority of the Senate, the gods of Olympus were disclaimed and rejected; and the year of this great event, which took place in 388 A.D., may be considered the date of the complete establishment of a Christian polity in the government of the Cæsars. Up to this epoch, the cause of truth, though far in the ascendant, had proceeded with a fluctuating progress. Till the time of Gratian, the Christian emperors had permitted themselves to be invested with the dress and dignity of supreme pontiff. Gratian put an end to all these symbols of the ancient superstition, and abolished a long train of rites, ceremonies, and offices, which had still maintained in existence a large portion of the external fabric of heathenism.

The augurs, the vestals, the flamens, the fraternity of the Salians, and many other sacerdotal and civil institutions, which had been continued from the reign of Numa to that of Gratian, terminated with the accession of that Emperor, the early days of whose government were marked by a zeal beyond that of any of his predecessors for the Christian cause. But paganism was still, in name and structure, the constitutional religion of the empire. Until the page of history opened at the æra at which we are now arrived, in the chamber or hall where the Roman Senate assembled, still in marble pomp stood the stately figure of a female on a globe with a crown of laurel on her head; and at this Altar of Victory, which was its consecrated name, the senators were sworn to obey the laws of the empire. The statue and altar had been removed by Constantius, restored by Julian, and again ejected by Gratian. Still, however, as paganism, in the whole or in part, was the religion of the majority of the Senate, that majority continued to petition for the restoration of the cherished monument. The glory of establishing the Christian worship on the ruins of the ancient superstition, in Rome and her provinces, was reserved for Theodosius the Great. His decrees were peremptory and decisive against the auguries, the sacrifices, the services and ceremonies of the heathen temples. The throng of deities with which the heavens had so long been peopled by superstition was discarded, and allowed a place only in the machinery of poetry and the provinces of fiction.

Thus was the old superstition with its gross mythology expelled by human authority from the limits of Roman domination. But its effect was ejection, not eradication. It still lives in seminal vitality in the subsoil of our nature, and often shows itself on the surface in forms to captivate consent, or to elude suspicion. In opposition to that spiritual change and renewal which Christianity and the Bible require, it makes its court to the senses, and offers to the weak and unstable a tangible and attractive support. Its pomps, processions, and gorgeous rites and celebrations were seducing models for Christian imitation long after the originals were withdrawn. A secret commerce and good understanding continued and continues to be kept up between a large portion of the world, who hold the truth in unrighteousness, and the spirit of heathenism under its multiform disguises. This commerce still exists between pagan and papal Rome. A treacherous compromise has restored to repudiated idolatry a partnership in the services and solemnities of the temple. "The carnal professors of Christianity, who were most numerous, were not content to part with their pagan rites; wherefore," says the author of 'The Court of the Gentiles,' "to compromise the matter, they turned the pagan rites into Christian solemnities, and so christened their dæmon festivals under the name of some Christian martyr or saint; and what made this design more plausible was this—some groundless hopes, by such symbolising with the pagans, to gain them over to embrace the Christian religion; which vain attempt was so far blasted by God, as that it proved but a door to let in Antichrist and all his idol worship into the Church of Rome."[1]

Thus the Roman Church may, indeed, boast of great antiquity; for its derivation is direct from that deep well-spring of human error and human depravity—heathen idolatry. And, again, we must beg the reader to allow us to exhibit another passage from the preface of the learned Theophilus Gale to his 'Court of the Gentiles.' "The last branch of Antichristianism I shall here mention is the canonist's theology, touching the canonisation and worship of saints, which stands in such a compliance with the pagan *ἀποθέωσις* and Dæmonolatrie as seems not to have been accidental and casual, but studied and contrived. The very popish directory of the inquisitors sticks not to call the canonisation of saints their apotheosis, i. e. deification. And that the whole papal *ἁγιολατρεία*, or saint worship, is but an imitation of the pagan *δεισιδαιμονία*, or dæmon worship, is excellently explicated and demonstrated by judicious Mede on 1 Tim. iv. 1, 2, touching the 'Apostasie of these latter times.' This we may demonstrate by a parallel betwixt the papal saints and pagan dæmons—(1) in their origin; (2) in their formal apotheosis; (3) in their mediatorial offices; (4) in their festivals; (5) in their images and reliques; (6) in the offerings made to them; (7) in their exorcisms and miracles; (8) in the invocation of them; (9) in the sacred rites and ceremonies performed to them; (10) in that hierarchy and supremacy assumed by the Pope, that great dæmonarch. In all these regards there seems to be an intimate symbolisation between the papal *ἁγιολατρεία* and pagan *δεισιδαιμονία*, which was the great figment of the philosophers."

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[1] [Such was the policy of Pope Gregory when he gave instructions to the missionaries whom he sent into this country for the conversion of the Saxons. He appears to have ordered many concessions to be made to the superstitions of that rude people. "Whatever popular customs of heathenism were found to be absolutely not incompatible with Christianity were retained, and some of them were continued to a very late period. Deer were, at a certain season, brought into St. Paul's Church, London, and laid on the altar; and this custom subsisted until the Reformation." "Nothing," says Burke, in stating this, "could have been more prudent than these regulations; they were, indeed, formed from a perfect understanding of human nature." An enlightened Christian would be apt to view this policy very differently.—See Burke's 'Abridgment of English History' (Works, vol. x. p. 265).—Ed.]

Neither ought we to forget, among the sources of an Antichristian theology, the pagan philosophy, by the monks and schoolmen distorted and appropriated, till out of it has been formed an artificial system of reasoning and disputation. Thus, through the modern Aristotelians, has the masonry been furnished of a new temple of Baal in Babylonish Rome.

The Fathers of the early Church of Christ, down to the fourth century, which, though distinguished by great men, was distinguished also by the growth of numerous corruptions, resisted the influx of pagan superstition; but Rome has looked for its model and type in the rankest ages of ethnical extravagance, and her triple crown expresses the threefold combination of fable, idolatry, and philosophical fiction.

Had Rome and her votaries, when they were about it, copied the dogmas of more remote antiquity, they could have arrived at sources of far purer divinity than that which they have so grossly mixed with the genuine revelation of Scripture. The Divine worship, as instituted by Pythagoras and adopted by his adherents, was such as might well put to shame the Romanist, with his material symbols and his spurious calendar of saints; and from Numa Pompilius they might learn to entertain higher notions of the invisible God than are consistent with their unspiritual forms and inventions, and to acknowledge the reproachful fact that in heathen Rome no image of God, either graven or painted, disgraced the capital for the space of one hundred and seventy years.[1] Conformable whereto is the great Pythagorean symbol, forbidding to grave the image of God; and what Ludovicus Vives, a writer of the Romish communion, says on this subject is worthy to be recorded in modern Rome.[2]

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[1] "Οὗτος δὲ διεκώλυσεν ἀνθρωποειδῆ καὶ ζωόμορφον εἰκόνα Θεοῦ Ῥωμαίοις νομίζειν. Οὐ δ' ἦν παρ' αὐτοῖς οὔτε γραπτὸν οὔτε πλαστὸν εἶδος Θεοῦ πρότερον, ἀλλ' ἑκατὸν ἑβδομήκοντα τοῖς πρώτοις ἔτεσι ναοὺς μὲν οἰκοδομούμενοι διετέλουν, καὶ καλιάδας ἱερὰς ἱστῶντες, ἄγαλμα δὲ οὐδὲν ἔμμορφον ποιούμενοι διετέλουν. Ὡς οὔτε ὅσιον ἀφομοιοῦν τὰ βελτίονα τοῖς χειρόσιν, οὔτε ἐφάπτεσθαι Θεοῦ δυνατὸν ἄλλως ἢ νοήσει."—Plut. 'Vit. Numæ.'

["Honestus et bonus erat Numa, et, splendidâ præditus intelligentiâ, etiam plurimas sacerdotum constituit leges. Diligenter ergo inquiramus quem habuerit ille cultûs modum. Scripsit igitur de eo Dionysius Halicarnasseus, qui Romanorum Historiam diligenter composuit, quod templa quidem et delubra extruxerit, *simulachrum autem in illis erat nullum*. Nam quia Pythagoræ philosophiam commendabat, cujus et dogmata sequebatur, cognoverat Deum omnino specie et formâ tali carere, affirmabatque Illum gaudere mentalibus, et non carnalibus, sacrificiis. Idcirco et constructa templa fidei nominabat, qua sola Deum ab hominibus, quantum capaces sunt, videtur: et subditis præcipiebat ut per fidem jurarent."—Cyrillus 'Cont. Julian.,' lib. VI. p. 193, D. edit. Spanh. Lips. 1696. Quoted by Calfhill. 'Answer to Martiall,' p. 362 (P.S.E.).

"It is a remarkable fact, as stated by Platina, that Pope Gregory III. withdrew his allegiance from the Eastern Emperor, Leo III., on the very ground of his being an Iconoclast. "Hic statim ubi Pontificatum iniit, cleri Romani consensu, Leonem III. Imperatorem Constantinopolitanum Imperio simul, et communione fidelium privat quod sanctas imagines e sacris ædibus abrasisset, et statuas demolitus esset, quodque etiam de homusio male sentiret." In a Lateran Council, held during the Pontificate of Stephen III., in which an Iconoclast Greek Council, held at Constantinople, was anathematised, the following curious reason was assigned for worshipping God through an image; that, according to that "detestable" Greek Council, "Dei immortalis conditio pejor quam hominum fieret. Referre enim statuas mortalium bene de re publica meritorum licet, ne ingrati videremur. Dei non licet, quem semper ante oculos, si fieri posset, habere deberemus, si ejus merita erga humanum genus, si naturæ Divinæ dignitatem, inspicimus?"—Platina in 'Vita Steph. III.' Contrast this with Deut. xvi. 22: "Neither shalt thou set thee up any image, which the Lord thy God hateth."—ED.]

[2] "Multi Christiani in re bona plerumque peccant, quod divos divasque non aliter venerantur quam Deum; nec video in multis quod sit discrimen inter eorum opinionem de sanctis, et id quod Gentiles

The pen is tempted, by the abundance of the matter, in touching on this subject, to detain the reader too long on a collateral inquiry; but it shall not transgress further than by observing that, whether his attention passes from the *dii præsides* and *indigetes* of pagan idolatry to the saints of the Romish calendar, tracing the affinity of their offices, their pictured and sculptured forms, the votive furniture of their shrines, their titles and their patronage; or from the deifications of heathen dæmonology to modern canonisation;[1] or from the fumes ascending from the pagan altars to the incense of the Romish sanctuary; or from the lamps which lighted up the noon before the statues of the heathen gods to those which perform a like office before the images of saints; or from the ancient to the modern portents of pictures or statues tumbling from heaven, or weeping, sweating, or bleeding upon earth; or from the protective powers of dæmons or demigods to the mediatorial agency of angels or saints; or from pagan to papal purgatory;[2] or from pagan to popish

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putabant de suis diis."—Lud. Viv. in Aug. 'De Civ. Dei,' lib. VIII. c. 27 (Basil. 1522). No wonder that the Louvain doctors should have omitted some of the passages in Ludovicus Vives as too bold and free. They were too near the truth for those gentlemen.—See Calfhill's 'Treat. in Answer to Martiall' (Park. ed. p. 20). "Quis adorat, aut orat, intuens simulachrum, qui non sic afficitur ut ab eo se exaudiri putat, ac ab eo sibi præstari quod desiderat speret?"—'Aug. in Psa. cxv.' as quoted by Bishop Jewel, 14th Art. p. 380 (edit. 1611).

[1] Though the apotheoses of heathen Rome were much less frequent than the beatifications and canonisations of modern Rome, they were alike based upon lying reports and fraudulent miracles. Some prodigy or other was never wanting when a dead emperor was to be deified. But for the credit of pagan moderation let it be remembered that from Romulus to Augustus we find no recorded instance of this sottish extravagance. One Julius Proculus took a solemn oath that Romulus himself appeared to him, and ordered him to inform the Senate of his being called up to the assembly of the gods, under the name of Quirinus. (See Plutarch, 'Life of Romulus,' and Dionys. Hal. lib. II.) Augustus revived the apotheosis in the person of Julius Cæsar, with the pomps and ceremonies with which it was afterwards celebrated. The reader will find a full account of the deification of the Emperor Septimius Severus in Herodian's interesting history of the Roman emperors. The invocation of saints and adoring of relics began to be practised in the Church presently after the death of Julian. (Mede's 'Apostacie of Latter Times,' pp. 120–123.)

[2] That there is after death a state of penal purgation is a doctrine involving a complication of absurdities, contradictions, and anti-scriptural conceits. It had its foundation in the dark bewilderment of pagan superstition, and was adopted by the priestcraft of the Romish Church to multiply masses and indulgences, and to set up the wicked notion of a treasury of superabundant and disposable merits at the will of the Pontiff. The reader of Plato need not be reminded of the description of purgatory, given pretty much at large in the Phædon. or Dialogue concerning the Soul. 62: "Τούτων δὲ οὕτω πεφυκότων, ἐπειδὰν ἀφίκωνται οἱ τετελευτηκότες εἰς τὸν τόπον, οἶ ὁ δαίμων ἕκαστον κομίζει, πρῶτον μὲν διεδικάσαντο οἵ τε καλῶς καὶ ὁσίως καὶ δικαίως βιώσαντες, καὶ οἱ μή. Καὶ οἱ μὲν ἂν δόξωσι μέσως

penance; or, lastly, from the pagan to the popish priesthood;—in whatever aspects he is led to compare these successful schemes of delusion set on foot by the great author of evil, he will not fail to discern the remnants and rags of heathen pollution, imperfectly disguised by the paint and purple of apostate Rome.

The life of Ambrose has carried us through an important part of ecclesiastical history in the western division of the Roman empire. Of all the champions of the Church in the fourth century, no one did so much to prepare the way for the exaltation of a priesthood, and the gradual formation of a power which ambitious men, placed in the most advantageous situation possible for swaying the prejudices and infirmities of a rude age, would, as a matter of course, endeavour to establish. Hierom, or, according to his more usual designation, Jerom, filled a less exalted situation than Ambrose, having never risen above the rank of presbyter; but as none were more conspicuous among the Latin Fathers, and as his time upon earth nearly coincided with that of Ambrose, we will bring him next before the reader.

Jerom was born at Stridon, a city on the borders of Dalmatia, in the ancient Pannonia, as we learn from himself in his catalogue of illustrious writers. The time of his birth was either in 339 or 340. He appears to have descended from a good family, and to have had a competent estate. He completed his studies at Rome under the famous grammarian Donatus; there he made a remarkable progress in the Greek and Latin tongues, and pleaded at the public bar. Under the government of Valens, he prosecuted his travels for improvement into France and various provinces of the West. He returned to Rome, and resided there, till his desire to proceed in his studies and spiritual exercises

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*βεβιωκέναι, πορευθέντες ἐπὶ τὸν Ἀχέροντα, ἀναβάντες ἃ δὴ αὐτοῖς ὀχήματά ἐστιν, ἐπὶ τούτων ἀφικνοῦνται εἰς τὴν λίμνην, καὶ ἐκεῖ οἰκοῦσί τε, καὶ καθαιρόμενοι, τῶν τε ἀδικημάτων διδόντες δίκας, ἀπολύονται, εἴ τις τι ἠδίκησε.*" I produce only these few words of the original to show how fully the heathen philosopher had the same purgatory in his thoughts, which has been dogmatically carried out in the creed imposed by Romish imposture. The whole passage, extending through several pages, shows the clear traces of the popish purgatory in the theory of ancient philosophy. Virgil takes up the doctrine in the sixth book of his Æneid, thus:—

"..... Aliæ panduntur inanes
Suspensæ ad ventos; aliis sub gurgite vasto
Infectum eluitur scelus, aut exuritur igni."

"It is more than clear," says Morland, in his Introduction to his 'History of the Evangelical Churches of the Valleys of Piedmont,' "that the heathens were the first that kindled the fire of purgatory in the world. And the truth is, Bellarmine himself confesses so much, when he *proves* the doctrines of purgatory from the testimony of Plato, Cicero, and Virgil."

without interruption determined him retire into the solitudes of Syria. Heliodorus, who had accompanied him thither, together with three other companions, soon became weary of his solitude, and returned into his own country, but was overtaken by a letter from Jerom to implore him to return, blotted, as he tells him he would find it, with his tears. The epistle, which is very characteristic of Jerom, runs thus: "Remember that in your baptism you enlisted yourself a soldier of Jesus Christ, and therein took an oath of fidelity to relinquish father and mother and whatever was dear to you, for His service. Therefore, though your little nephew should hang about your neck, though your mother should rend her garments and lay open the bosom that bare you, and though your father should lay himself down on the threshold to stop you, yet step over your father, and follow the standard of the Cross with dry eyes. It is a great mercy to be cruel on such occasions. I know you will say the Scripture commands us to obey our parents, and I grant it to be true; but then consider that whosoever loveth them more than Christ loseth his own soul."

In the solitudes of Syria Jerom passed several years in laborious study and pious exercises, improving his acquaintance with the Hebrew language, and composing commentaries on the Scriptures. The loss of his companions, and severe sickness, induced him to leave the desert and repair to Antioch, where he was ordained a presbyter by Paulinus, who was then contending for that see with Meletius and Vitalis; this took place in 374. Some years after this he made a journey to Constantinople, where he passed some time in the society of Gregory Nazianzen, from whom he acknowledges himself to have derived much profitable instruction. From Constantinople he repaired to Rome about the affairs of Antioch, that city being then agitated by the contentions for the episcopal chair. He remained at Rome for about the space of three years, being detained there by Damasus, the then bishop, who derived much assistance from his learning and abilities in the government of his see.

Having Damasus thus brought before us, it is difficult to pass him by without making him the subject of some observations. He stands out in special relief among the early bishops, as distinguished by making that title and office the prize of a carnal competition in the application of secular policy, political craft, and physical strength. It was about the middle of the fourth century that the see of Rome distinctly put forth its claims to ecclesiastical supremacy. Its name, its sound, its metropolitan dignity and prescriptive grandeur, had long engaged popular feelings and prejudices in its favour; in addition to which advantages, its jurisdiction, its revenues, its patronage, the magnificence and pomp of its court, the numerous appendages of state by which it was surrounded, and the concourse of its officers, ministers, and retainers, all combined to accredit its bold pretensions, and to promote those continuous efforts in the prosecution of one unvaried object, which were never remitted or relaxed in the sequel of its ambitious career.

So fascinating to the minds of Christians was this worldly greatness, even in this early age of the Church, that the succession to the see of Rome, which then depended upon the voices of the priests and people, produced contentions so violent as to lead to the most sanguinary results. This was remarkably the case in the year 366, when Damasus and Ursinus, or Urcisinus, contended for the vacant throne of the Roman episcopate. A bloody war arose in the streets of the capital. A great loss of life, and the burning of many houses, were the fruits of the deadly animosity with which the partisans of the respective candidates struggled for victory. The party of Damasus was victorious, but not, as we learn from Ammianus Marcellinus,[1] till one hundred and thirty-seven corpses of the slain, the effect of one day's furious conflict, were found lying in the church of Sicininus. The story of this strange occurrence may be thus collected from Socrates, Marcellinus, Tillemont, and Leclerc. On the death of Liberius, those who had been his adherents proceeded to elect Ursinus to the vacant chair. But Damasus drew after him a furious rabble, with whom he forced his way into the churches, and all opposers were trampled down and destroyed. After this, with a band of gladiators whom he hired for the purpose, he seized the Lateran church, and was there ordained, and having bribed the magistrates of the city, he caused his opponent to be sent into exile. The people, it is said, would have hindered him from taking possession of the pontificate; but he cleared his way through them with blows, and some died of the wounds they received. Then, with the ecclesiastics of his faction, joined to gladiators, charioteers, and rustics armed with hatchets, swords, and clubs, he besieged one of the churches, where some of the adverse interest were assembled, and began a furious battle. Setting fire to the doors, and bursting them open, he forced his way in, slew one hundred and sixty persons, men and women, and wounded many. But, notwithstanding all this, Damasus was a saint, and miracles were ascribed to him after his death!

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[1] [Ammianus, a heathen historian, passes a grave censure on these fighters for a Christian bishopric, and animadverts, in forcible language, on the pomp and luxury of the Roman see.—See Lib. xxvii. c. 3. —Ed.]

When seated in the episcopate he was as active as such instances of personal vigour gave reason to expect, in the prosecution and punishment of heretics and schismatics, whom he deposed, excommunicated, and banished with a vindictive and unsparing hand. It must be owned, however, that the character of this Pope has been variously represented. Theodoret calls him a man adorned with every virtue, "*Δαμασος πάμπολλοις ἀρετῆς κοσμούμενος εἶδεσιν*," and conspicuous for the sanctity of his life, "*Ἀξιεπαινέτῳ βίῳ κοσμούμενος*." But the opinion entertained of him by Basil was of the opposite cast, in whose pages he comes forth with those attributes and qualities which, however they might qualify for a good pope, would make but a bad Christian. He lived seventy-nine years upon earth, and ruled the papal see during eighteen years, out of which three years were passed in an intercourse of intelligence and communion with Jerom. Some of his letters are extant; and two synodical epistles, and a confession of faith, are preserved by Theodoret in his ecclesiastical history. An epistle to Paulinus, Bishop of Antioch, and some epitaphs, inscriptions, and epigrams are in existence.[1]

Jerom, while at Rome, was engaged in a controversy with Helvidius, who had written a treatise to prove that, after the birth of Christ, the Virgin Mary had children by her husband Joseph. His arguments, drawn from two or three ambiguous passages, too well known to need a reference here, were pertinently answered by Jerom. It was, indeed, a point of presumptuous speculation, not admitting of any legitimate argument, and altogether unfit to be discussed. During this interval of his life, Jerom formed a friendship with several eminent females of high birth and station, among whom Paula and Eustochium were the most distinguished, to the latter of whom he addressed his discourse on the excellence of virginity, comprising a system of severe rules for the conduct of a holy single life. He dissuades her from reading profane books; and tells her that, being once too eager in the perusal of Cicero, Plautus, and other ancient classics, he was seized with a violent fever and fell into an agony, in which he was carried by the Spirit to the tribunal of Christ, where, after a severe scourging, he was charged to indulge no more in such reading. This story he assured her was no dream; and yet, when Rufinus afterwards upbraided him for continuing, notwithstanding this chastisement and warning, to read the classics, he ridiculed him for taking a dream for a reality. His conscience certainly was not over scrupulous concerning the allowableness of a false statement to promote a pious purpose.

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[1] See Hieron. 'De Viris Illustr.' c. 103.

At the end of three years from his coming to Rome, Jerom travelled again to Antioch, thence to Egypt and Jerusalem, and finally to Bethlehem. Here he took up his permanent residence in a little cell, whither the devout ladies Paula, Eustochium, and Melania followed him, and when the settlement of the solitaries that gathered round the holy man was sufficiently numerous, Paula erected four monasteries and a church for their reception and worship. Here Jerom composed his treatise against Jovinian, in which he carried his views to greater length in his defence of virginity, and offended many by his unwarrantable invectives against the matrimonial state. He expended without measure, and in terms of the bitterest hostility, his wrath against Vigilantius for his reforming doctrines. His letter to Nepotian, the nephew of Heliodorus, on the office of the sacred ministry, and, after his nephew's early decease, his consolatory epistle to the uncle, are much celebrated. They certainly do honour to his pen, and bear a favourable testimony to his principles and his feelings. In his letter to Demetrias, granddaughter of Proba, he argues again in defence and commendation of virginity; but the letter is valuable for the clear and sound exposition it contains of divine grace as the gift of gratuitous mercy. His commentaries on Scripture are among the best which the Fathers have bequeathed to us. But the work which bears the strongest testimony to the zeal and industry of Jerom is his translation of the Scriptures from the original language into Latin. His perseverance was put to the test, not only by the difficulty of the task, but by some discouragements. Augustin thus writes to him on the subject: "I must own I should be better pleased to see you engaged in translating the Greek of the Seventy interpreters. But the cause of the discrepancy between the Hebrew original and the Greek translation which we call the Septuagint, I wish you would have the kindness to explain. Surely a work must be regarded as of no mean authority which has been thought worthy of so wide a diffusion, and the adoption of which by the Apostles is proved by their writings. You would therefore be an instrument of much good if you would exhibit in Latin, with the fidelity which may be expected from you, the Greek Septuagint, of which the Greek copies are so variant from each other as to make it to be feared that when anything in Scripture is to be proved out of it, the copy when produced may exhibit something different." But Jerom had a more hostile opposition to encounter. Rufinus and others charged him with perverting the Scriptures, and despising the authority of the Apostles by rejecting the translation of the Seventy. But he was not thereby deterred from proceeding with his work, for the necessity of which he contended on the ground of the want of exactness in the Seventy, and its great disagreement with the Hebrew text; defending himself at the same time from the charge of prejudice, as he had been employed in his youth in translating the Septuagint. A short account of the occasion and execution of that work may not be out of place if here introduced.

The Bible was translated into Greek from the Hebrew by the Hellenistic Jews of Alexandria, who had been so long unfamiliar with the Hebrew that some errors are to be expected from them. The story of Aristeus is treated by Bentley in his 'Phalaris,' and by Prideaux in his 'Connection,' as a fable and imposture, though it still obtained the name of Septuagint, as written by seventy persons, each of whom was said to have executed the entire work in a separate cell without the minutest variation. It was finished at Alexandria in the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus, and so great was the credit of this Greek version, that the Evangelists and Apostles all quoted from it, and after them the primitive Fathers. All the Greek Churches used it, and the Latins had no other copy of the Scriptures in their language, till Jerom's time, but what was translated therefrom. All the versions, Gothic, Arabic, Ethiopic, and Armenian, were made from it, the Syriac alone being translated from the original Hebrew.

The Septuagint was completed in the year 272 before Christ. In after times three other versions of the Scriptures, before adverted to, were prepared—one by Aquila, a proselyte Jew of Sinope, in the reign of Hadrian ; another by Theodotion, in the reign of Commodus ; and the third by Symmachus, in the reigns of Severus and Caracalla. That by Aquila was written to favour the prejudices of the Jews, the others, probably, to favour the heretical sects to which they belonged, being nominally Christians, but Jews in practice and observance, and Ebionites in their doctrine and tenets.

All these four different versions, of which that of Theodotion is esteemed the most correct, being between the literal and close translation of Aquila and the free version of Symmachus, were collected into one volume, as has been already stated, by Origen, whose work, in its extended form, was completed about the year 250 A.D. From that date to the period of Jerom's great undertaking, many errors had crept into the copies from the carelessness of the transcribers, who gave too little heed to the various marks by which Origen had indicated what was redundant or deficient in the text of the Septuagint, which he nevertheless exhibited entire as it then stood.

Jerom at first did no more than correct the original Septuagint, and amend the common edition of the Hexapla, setting down the particulars in which the Septuagint differed from the Hebrew text ; but when he afterwards attained to a better acquaintance with the Hebrew, he put forth a new and entire Latin version of the original. His performance was received with much opposition, and candour towards that eminent man calls for an acknowledgment that by such opposition his patience and humility were somewhat severely tried. He was accused by some of perverting the Scriptures and despising the authority of the Apostles ; but Jerom stands abundantly vindicated from all such charges.

It is due to the good sense and judgment of Jerom to acknowledge the plain and perspicuous diction in which his commentaries are composed, from which all rhetoric was excluded, and a very laudable and becoming simplicity of style adopted. In his other works the graces of composition seemed to be always at his command, when needful to the subject for ornament or illustration.

In the judgment of Erasmus he was excelled by none, and hardly equalled by any, of the most eminent of the Christian writers who flourished in his day or before him. In philological literature, and the various range of philosophy and history, he assigned him a place among the most accomplished scholars, and would hardly allow him to be second in the beauties of eloquence to the prince of Roman orators.[1]

He died in his monastery at Bethlehem in the year of our Lord 220, and about the eightieth year of his age.

Of the character of Jerom his own pen has left us in little doubt. His treatises, but especially his letters, stamped as they are with the worth and excellence of extensive learning and high intellectual attainments, reveal, through a painful and mortified exterior, all the irritable and disturbing elements which minister to the angry passions and the proud heart. His pertinacity was prolific in quarrels, and there was hardly a period of his existence which was not distinguished by some notable strife with some eminent Christian who presumed to hold opinions at variance with any of the dogmas on which he was pleased to affix the seal of his authority. Neither the dignity of Augustin's deportment, nor the depth and value of his theological attainments, nor the amiable aspect of his Christian graces, could confer on him the privilege of contradicting Jerom with impunity. His letters to the Bishop of Hippo on some scriptural topics discover the dogmatic irritability of his temper. Among his peculiar opinions, he entertained a notion that both St. Peter and St. Paul were equally opposed to the Judaizing spirit which was so prevalent among the Hebrew converts, and that the rebuke of St. Paul was only simulated, being the result of a previous arrangement and understanding between the two Apostles for impressing upon others the proper conduct to be observed by them in reference to the subject.

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[1] It was too much the practice of the age to which our attention is now drawn, to overwhelm the memories of the men who were eminent in the Christian world for their defences of the truth, or for the ascetic severity of their lives, with the most unqualified, extravagant, and even profane eulogy. The praises bestowed on Jerom by his surviving friends and admirers were of this description. Eusebius, of Cremona, who calls himself Hieronymi sanctissimi discipulus, expressed his homage for Jerom in the following terms:—"God at sundry times and in divers manners has spoken to us all by His most beloved son, holy Jerom, concerning the Holy Scriptures, by miracles, and many wonders."

The same blasphemous application of the words of Saint Paul was made in one of the sermons preached at the canonisation of Ignatius Loyola, under the sanction of the Pope Paul V. The language used was as follows:—"Undoubtedly the founders of the rest of the religious orders have been sent for the sake of the Church, but, last of all, God hath spoken to us in these days by His son Ignatius, whom He hath appointed heir of all things; and to whom nothing is wanting to his praise but this—by whom also He made the world."

The Church of Rome has never been slow in complimenting her saints with the same impious and detestable perversions of Scripture. To St. Francis were applied the beautiful words of the eighteenth psalm: "He rode upon the Cherubim, and flew upon the wings of the wind." And to St. Dominic, the founder of the Inquisition, "Thou art fairer than the children of men; grace is poured into thy lips."

Pope Leo X., on his consecration, was complimented, in the same spirit of blasphemy, as the Lion of the tribe of Judah—See Thuanus, 'Hist. Contin.' lib. IV.; Elliot, 'Hor. Apoc.'

In his commentary on the Galatians, he explains himself on this head. He there says that St. Paul acted this part with St. Peter in order that the hypocrisy or false show of observing the law, which offended the believing Gentiles, might be corrected by the hypocrisy or false show of reprehension; and that by this contrivance both the one and the other object might be secured, whilst those who commended circumcision followed St. Peter, and those who were opposed to it adopted the liberty of St. Paul.

This opinion, so derogatory to the characters of two holy Apostles of our Lord, was decidedly condemned by Augustin, and the controversy between him and Jerom on the subject was maintained with much characteristic feeling on each side.

Jerom's reasoning with Augustin was disingenuous. He thus encounters him: "Your argument is rather a novel one. You maintain that the Gentiles who believed in Christ were exempt from the burthen of the law, while *the believing Jews were subject to the law;* and that in the persons of the two Apostles the whole doctrine was maintained—Paul, as a teacher of the Gentiles, reproved those who kept the law, and Peter is rightly reprehended for having, as the chief of the circumcision, imposed that upon the Gentiles which it became only the Jewish converts to observe. Now if you really are of opinion that the believing Jews were debtors to perform the ceremonial law, surely you ought, as being a bishop so famous through the whole world, to publish it universally, and to bring all your brother bishops to the same opinion." It was charging Augustin very unfairly to impute to him an opinion that "the believing Jews" *were subject to, or debtors to, perform the ceremonial law.* Augustin states his opinion on this subject very explicitly and discriminately in a letter to Jerom in the following terms: "My belief, therefore, is this: that Peter did what he did that he might induce the Gentiles to Judaize, for that is what Paul wrote, whom I believe incapable of falsifying. And in that Peter acted wrongly, for it was contrary to the Gospel to say that they who believed in Christ were not safe without retaining the old ceremonies of the first dispensation. It was for this that the believing Jews of Antioch contended, whom Paul perseveringly and sharply opposed. He neither circumcised Timothy nor performed his vow at Cenchrea, nor, by the advice of James, joined in the observance of the same rites with those who had vowed, to make it appear that he thought that Christian *salvation* depended upon any such ceremonies, but that he might not be considered as condemning those things which God had commanded to be observed by the former generation as the prefiguration of things to come, as if they were upon a footing with the idolatries of the heathens."

Augustin's opinion as to the Judaizing of Paul and Peter was in effect as follows:—That James gave the advice to Paul above alluded to, in order that the believing Jews who retained a zeal for the law might know that what they had been told concerning Paul was not true, and not be made to think that the ministrations of Moses to their fathers were meant to be condemned as sacrilegious, and contrary to the commandments of God. It was considered by Paul that some allowance might be made to those believing Jews who were still zealously attached to their ancient usages, from a reverence to their Divine authority and prophetic sanctity, unmixed with any belief in their power of procuring or promoting their salvation, which they knew to be revealed as imparted only through Christ. But the blessed Apostle of the Gentiles, who was a most earnest preacher of grace, teaching in all his ministry that not by the works of the law men were to be justified, but by the merits and sacrifice of Jesus Christ, of which the law contained only the types and shadows, gave no consent or countenance to those who were tenacious of their ceremonies and legal institutions as essential to their *salvation*. He thought that neither were the Jews to be forbidden the exercise of them as *essentially* wicked and criminal, nor the Gentiles to be compelled to adopt them as necessary to their salvation. Paul brought no new truth to the conscience or recollection of Peter, but convicted him of some dissimulation in calling upon the Gentiles to Judaize.

The sacraments which were commanded under the old Dispensation did not continue to be good under a better covenant, inasmuch as men cannot be justified by them, for they are only the shadows and prenunciators of the grace whereby we are justified; nor were they to be considered as altogether bad, inasmuch as they were instituted by Divine authority, and were suited to the seasons and occasions to which they related. They were intended gradually to disappear before the fervent preaching of the grace of Christ. By that alone believers could be made to discern that they could not be justified or saved by those things, which, after our Lord came in the flesh, became wholly unnecessary and unmeaning.

The sum of Augustin's sentiments on this much-agitated question was thus vigorously expressed and illustrated by that eminent Father:—"When these usages (the faith which was prenunciated by them being fully disclosed by the death and resurrection of our Lord) had lost their official vitality, they were properly to be considered as defunct, and calling only for decent burial, yet it was right that that burial should be marked by a real and not a pretended respect; nor was the carcase suddenly to be abandoned to hostile contempt, and thrown, as it were, to the dogs. While on the other hand, whosoever, even among the Jewish converts, should desire to celebrate those buried usages, by raking them from their ashes, would not be the performer of their funeral obsequies, but an impious violator of the repose of the sepulchre."

The soreness of Jerom in being thus differed from in a matter in which the credit of his own judgment and the clearness of his Scriptural views appeared to be involved, discovered itself very conspicuously in a long apologetical letter addressed to his friend. He thus expresses himself in reference to the light in which the rebuke by Paul of the conduct of his apostolical brother was viewed by him:—"Do not think me to be the patron of a lie, who am, indeed, the follower of Him who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. It can never be that I, who have so long been a worshipper of truth, could suddenly so change my character, and enter into the service of falsehood. Do not stir up against me a multitude of the mean and ignorant, who reverence you as their bishop, and hear your declamations in the church with the homage which belongs to sacerdotal dignity, while of me they make little account, as of one in the decrepitude of second childhood, and buried in the obscurity of rural and monastic seclusion; but rather seek one on whom you may more fitly bestow your lessons and corrections." Again: "Do not by your attacks draw me forth into the field on Scriptural topics. I have had my day, and have run as long as I could. Now, while you pursue your course over a wider circuit, let me enjoy the repose which, I trust, I have earned. At the same time, with your good leave, I will borrow from the poets, as well as you. Remember Dares and Entellus; and be mindful also of the vulgar proverb that *the wearied ox treads with a heavier step.* Again: To make a frank confession of the truth, I felt, at first, a repugnance to answer you, because it was not perfectly clear that it was *your* letter which came to my hands. In the next place, I was desirous of avoiding all appearance of answering a bishop of my own communion with irreverence, and to retort upon him his own reproof, especially as it might happen that some things in his letter might appear in my judgment to border upon *heresy.* Either send me the same epistle signed with your hand, or desist from worrying an aged man, living concealed in the solitude of his cell. But if you desire to exercise or display your learning, do pray seek out some young man, eloquent and famous, such as are said to abound in Rome, who have both ability and courage, and are worthy to dispute with a bishop on Scriptural questions. As for me, who was once a soldier, but am now a veteran and unfit for service, my province is to sit by and applaud the victories of others; but by no means, with my worn-out body, to enter the field again. Should I be provoked to answer your repeated challenges, I will remind you of what history records of Fabius Maximus, who, by his wise delay, humbled the pride of the youthful Hannibal. Do not think me so absurd as to be mortified by your differing from me in opinion; but I do say that, if you find fault with anything said by me in conversation with you, and exact from me an apology for my writings, and call upon me to reform what I have written, and urge me to sing my palinode, and talk of teaching me to use my eyes better: in all this I must think that a wound is given to our friendship, and the rights of that intimate relation violated.

I am anxious that we may not appear to be carrying on a childish contest, or afford matter of controversy or faction to any who take the part of one of us against the other, or to our common detractors. You challenge an old man, and force a silent one into controversy, while you seem to brandish your learning in my face. But it would ill become my age to give place to any angry feelings in my intercourse with one to whom I ought to demean myself with all kindness and respect."

After perusing the above specimens of Jerom's petulancy of disposition in discussing a point on which, having once declared an opinion, he felt himself called upon, by the homage with which he regarded his own judgment, to resent its being brought into question by so gentle and candid a disputant as Augustin, we can hardly wonder at the intemperance with which the argument was conducted by him in his controversy with Rufinus, Jovinian, and Vigilantius.

By the quarrel between Jerom and Rufinus the whole state of the Church was thrown into much agitation. The cause of this great disturbance was his Latin translations of several of the works of Origen, principally of his treatise *περὶ ἀρχῶν*, which was executed by the Presbyter of Aquileia, at Rome, about 398, to which he prefixed a preface, wherein Jerom, with much praise, was represented as having espoused the tenets of Origen. He boasted he could bring out the work, freed by himself from the errors which were imputed to it; but as many dangerous errors still appeared in it, Pammachius and Oceanus, Jerom's friends, persuaded him to produce a faithful interpretation, that the errors it contained might appear in their full extent, and the world might be satisfied that the suspicion which Rufinus had endeavoured to cast upon him, of his being a favourer of the opinions of Origen, was without foundation. At the same time Jerom wrote an epistle to Pammachius and Oceanus, to repel from him the calumny of his having approved of the opinions of Origen, and to show the limitation by which his former praise of Origen was meant to be restricted and qualified. Rufinus wrote a defence of himself to Pope Anastasius, in which Jerom was very roughly handled, and which was answered with equal acrimony by Jerom. Neither of the disputants gained much glory in the contention. Rufinus must be admitted to rank among the most considerable men of the fourth century. Apart from his bitter contest with Jerom, he appears to have been an upright and estimable man. Mosheim admits him into the number of the best Latin writers of his time, and considers it as his great misfortune to have had the "powerful and foul-mouthed Jerom for his adversary," an epithet perhaps exceeding the bounds of severe justice."

Little is known respecting Rufinus. He is said to have been born at Concordia, near Aquileia, about the year of our Lord 330, and to have passed many of his earlier years in a monastery at Aquileia. He was baptized in 371, and, while residing in this city, he maintained a very intimate and friendly intercourse with Jerom. Attracted by the great reputation of the monks of the East, he repaired to Alexandria, and there became the intimate friend of a Roman lady, very rich, and agreeing with him in devoted attachment to the monastic life. He passed the ensuing six years among the monks of Egypt, chiefly with those who were settled in the wilderness of Nitria. In the year 376 A.D. he betook himself to Jerusalem, in company with Melania, and settled with other monks in cells about Mount Olivet, while Melania fixed herself in a nunnery, where she supported a numerous society of devout sisters. Here the friendship of Jerom and Rufinus, the former of whom was residing at Bethlehem, was carried on by an easy and frequent intercourse; Rufinus having been ordained a presbyter by John, Bishop of Jerusalem. But the calm communication of these friends was soon changed to a state of stormy agitation by a controversy which arose between them respecting the opinions of Origen. The removal of Rufinus and Melania to Rome suspended the quarrel for a short time; but it was unhappily renewed by the publication by Rufinus of some of the most exceptionable of Origen's works. He withdrew from Rome to Aquileia, where he continued for several years to Latinise his favourite, and to use his best efforts to promote the diffusion and credit of his productions; and here he composed defences of his author and of himself. On the invasion of Italy by the Goths under Alaric, Rufinus and Melania set out again on a retreat into Palestine; but in proceeding thither, through Sicily, Rufinus died, A.D. 410.

He was a man of undoubted abilities, with a mind stored with erudition diligently accumulated, but not a little warped by his partialities. He was not fairly treated by his great adversary

Jerom, whose reproaches he was not backward in retaliating, and whose resentful feelings were only inflamed by the arguments used in his defence. His 'Ecclesiastical History' has furnished a useful supplement to Eusebius, of whose work it is for the greater part a translation. His 'Vitæ Patrum,' or Annals of the Eastern monks, of whom he was an admirer, has not made posterity much his debtor. His apologies for Origen, his translation of Pamphilus' defence of the same Father, and his versions of his commentaries, and especially of his four books, 'De Principiis,' have found but few readers, and owe their notoriety chiefly to the invectives they drew upon him from the pen of Jerom. In his controversy with that acrimonious adversary, his steadiness and consistency were creditable to his character. He refused to attend the summons of Pope Anastasius, by whom he was called upon to vindicate himself from the accusations of his angry assailant; contenting himself with sending a declaration of his faith in conformity with the creed of the Catholic Church, and explaining and qualifying his views respecting the writings of Origen. For this conduct, which was considered contumacious and unsatisfactory, he was pronounced a heretic by Anastasius, but was not so discomposed by the sentence as to be thereby deterred from pursuing his controversy with Jerom, or from the tranquil prosecution of his studies. He was decidedly and strenuously opposed to the Arian heresy, and, under the Emperor Valens, was thrown into prison and exiled on account of his firm adherence to the orthodox faith. In his commentaries on various parts of the sacred Scriptures, his respect for the plain and literal sense, and his abstinence from the too frequent tendency of his times to multiply allegorical senses and constructions, do honour to his pen, though the latitude he has allowed himself in his versions of the Greek writers was a censurable part of his literary practice. On the whole the testimony most creditable to the character of Rufinus is involved in the affecting regrets thus expressed by the amiable Augustin in a letter to Jerom.

"Then, again, I am affected with the keenest sorrow to think that between you and Rufinus, to whom God has conceded in so large a measure those gifts which have always been the objects of our most ardent wishes, and who have, in such close and intimate friendship, partaken together of the honey of the Holy

Scriptures, so bitter a quarrel should have arisen. What time, what place, what human being can in future be regarded as secure from discord, after it has been found that a quarrel so severe could happen to men such as you are—mature in age and in communion with your Saviour—at a time, too, when, having rid yourselves alike of your worldly burthens, you were following the Lord as companions, and were walking harmoniously together in that land which our Lord had trod with human feet, and where He had said, 'Peace I leave with you; My peace I give unto you!' Truly this life is a continual trial. Alas! that I cannot somewhere meet you together, that I might cast myself at your feet, pour out my tears without restraint, and give full vent to my love in the language of supplication, addressed to each of you for his own sake, and to each for the sake of the other, and to both for the sake of all others, especially of the poor and weak, for whom Christ died, and who now regard you as great actors in life's theatre, with no little hazard to themselves. Do not, in your writings concerning each other, spread abroad things which you will be unable to cancel or obliterate when, if ever, a reconciliation shall take place—things which you will be afraid to read, as containing the elements of a new discord between you."[1]

With Jovinian we are made acquainted principally by the hostile treatment he experienced at the resentful hands of Jerom.

Towards the end of the fourth century, the lofty claims of the ruling authorities in the Church excited, in a few of its members, a disposition to resist some of its rules and dogmas, and to exercise their private judgments on the necessity or warrant for some of its requisitions. Ærius was one of these incipient reformers, a native of Pontus, or of the lesser Armenia, eloquent and pious, but carried by a free and fervid spirit into some excess in the expression of his opinions, so as to bring him under the imputation of semi-Arianism, which his early friendship with Eustathius, a distinguished semi-Arian, tended to confirm.

This friendship gave way, as it appears, to a very different feeling towards the same person when afterwards elevated to the bishopric of Sebaste, to which promotion Ærius was said to have himself aspired. If envy suggested the charges of avarice and misappropriation of the funds of the poor which he brought against his former friend, we cannot bespeak for Ærius a favourable interpretation of his general conduct; but whatever reflections may be cast upon his motives, the points he contended for cannot be reasonably condemned or reproved by the Christian who bases his belief on Scripture and Scripture alone. Ærius maintained that, at the time of the Apostles, there was no substantial difference, by Divine appointment, between a bishop and a presbyter, and, without denying the rights or jurisdiction of bishops, grounded on human authority, he ventured to publish his doubts whether a bishop, under that name and designation, had any special superiority vested in him by Scripture over the other elders of the Church. Prayers and alms of the living for the dead he held to be without use or warrant; and some of the ceremonies in practice among Christians, as the slaying of a lamb at Easter, he considered as open to great objection. That he urged his opinions with a zeal too indiscriminate has been observed by his opposers on very probable grounds; but his aims at reducing religion to a state more in accordance with its primitive simplicity, and to strip it of many of its ostentatious rites and formalities, entitled him to much more regard than the temper of the times was disposed to allow him.

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[1] What scholar, in reading this sentiment, has not the beautiful passage which Sophocles puts into the mouth of Ajax brought to his mind?

"Ὅ τ' ἐχθρὸς ἡμῖν ἐς τοσόνδ' ἐχθραντέος
Ὡς καὶ φιλήσων αὖθις."

Σοφοκ. Αἴας. 679.

In the same thin school of early reformers followed Jovinian, whose efforts in the defence of simple worship and scriptural sobriety exposed him, as was natural, to the severest censures of a Church that had already begun to base its authority on forms and superstitions which had no ground in Scripture or apostolical practice. He was an Italian monk, whether a native of Rome or Milan is uncertain, but signalised at both those places by doctrines of the same tendency with those of Ærius, which he maintained with equal, perhaps superior, power and success. He appears to have been so strenuously opposed by the union of the sacerdotal authorities, that probably his name would have been scarcely known to posterity had not Jerom by his invectives associated him with his own celebrity. Though living in single life himself, he taught that if men kept their baptismal vows, and lived godly lives, neither celibacy nor maceration of the body by fasting was required to perfect the Christian character. To live in wedlock, and nourish the body with temperance and moderation, were in his opinion neither opposed to Scripture nor repugnant to the spirit of Christianity. Other doctrines were taught by him which, if not kept under due limits and maintained with their proper qualifications, might issue in excess and error; but which, if rightly enforced and understood, might have operated as wholesome corrections to the fanaticism and spiritual pride too characteristic of the ecclesiastical body towards the end of the fourth century. His sentiments were condemned at Rome by Siricius, and especially at Milan in a council convened there by Ambrose in the year 390. Those holding his opinions were penally visited by imperial edicts, and Jovinian himself was banished to the little Isle of Boa, in the Adriatic Sea, by a decree of Honorius. The opinions of Jovinian were published by him in a book which was encountered by Jerom in a treatise wherein he poured forth his bitterest invectives, and which is still in being to show in their proper colours the sentiments and characters of the parties to the dispute.

But the reformer of most importance in the fourth century, and most signalised by the vituperative pen of Jerom, was Vigilantius, who, even in the inauspicious times we are now contemplating, appears to have sown some seeds which, though they lay pressed down by the feet of superstition, ignorance, and imposture for many centuries, were not destroyed, but in after times were quickened into fecundity, and responded to the culture of evangelical labourers.

The birth of Vigilantius is usually assigned to the period between 360 and 370 A.D. He was born in a village called Calagorris, situated at the foot of the Pyrenees, within the limits of Gaul, in the district of the ancient Convenæ, the present Comminges. His father appears to have derived no inconsiderable revenue from the charge of the station at Calagorris, where accommodation for travellers, and relays of horses and mules, were regularly provided. His early opportunities of acquiring knowledge must have been but scanty, as he is said to have passed his first years in the service of his father, as a waiter upon travellers, and a driver and guide across the Pyrenees. Difficulties are the provocations of strong capacities. To struggle through obstructions in the way to knowledge is a lot which genius has seldom to regret in tracing the progress of its attainments. The latter part of the fourth century was a period of much travelling among the great and learned, especially of the dignitaries of the Church, whose attendance on synods and assemblies was of frequent necessity, so as to occasion the borders of the two great kingdoms of France and Spain to be very frequently traversed; and this was an advantage of which the son of the postmaster of Calagorris was probably not slow to avail himself. It would be quite natural to the juvenile curiosity of his inquiring mind to profit by these occasions of intercourse. The numerous topics in agitation, at a period when the Creed of the Church was floating in so much controversy, laid the beginning of that knowledge in his youthful mind which was accumulated by subsequent communications with men of talent and experience resting under his roof on their way to their various destinations. But to the society and friendship of Sulpicius Severus he seems to have been indebted, if not for his conversion to the Christian faith, at least for guidance and encouragement in the Christian walk and life.

The estates of Sulpicius were on either side of the Pyrenees, and having on that account frequent occasion to cross the border by way of Calagorris, he became well acquainted with the merits of Vigilantius, whom he employed first as a simple domestic, and afterwards in the more confidential capacity of his bailiff and the receiver of his rents.

Whatever may have been the first step of Vigilantius towards the favour and confidence of Sulpicius, the fact of his having attained to a place among the intimate friends of that distinguished man speaks strongly for his personal recommendations. It was his advantage to witness, during his familiar intercourse with Sulpicius Severus, the changes which took place in his manners and opinions; and these changes he was well qualified by his natural discernment to contrast and compare. For a considerable period after his connection with Vigilantius had commenced, Sulpicius appears to have been characterised in an eminent degree by qualities which reflect dignity on wealth. He had also the superadded recommendation of classical learning. While no one in his day was more correct in Christian morals, none exceeded him in purity and elegance of composition. Unhappily, the current which at this period ran so strongly towards the monastic life in its most unmitigated and bigoted form, carried along with it the judgment and moderation of Sulpicius. His friendship with Paulinus, Bishop of Nola, amicable as it was, tended to foment the enthusiasm which betrayed both their judgments. This friendship stands recorded in a correspondence which, had it not been for a monkish extravagance of opinion and deportment, would have associated their names in an intercourse extremely interesting, and transmitted their characters to their posterity as well deserving to be honoured and imitated.

Vigilantius, in his youthful days, was often the bearer of these communications, in the course of which he had abundant opportunities of observing the habits and propensities which led these noble friends from their first position, on the safe ground of Christian moderation, to those excesses in which human pride too often seeks its gratification in ostentatious humility and uncalled-for sacrifices.

Sulpicius Severus, at the period of his ability to do most good in his generation, and most effectively to serve the cause of truth and orthodoxy, being at the maturity of his understanding and at the height of his reputation, was infected with the prevailing admiration of the monkish profession, and the still more imposing sequestration and solitude of the hermit's cell. He became an enthusiastic admirer of Martin, the Bishop of Tours, whose life he wrote with all the ridiculous legends which gave to that inflated figure its preternatural dimensions. The pen of Sulpicius was thus degraded to the office of giving to fables, too foolish and absurd for the entertainment of the most childish credulity, the recommendations of a style which belonged to the dignity of truth and virtue.

The late Doctor Gilly has favoured the world with a most interesting and instructive view of the life and times of Vigilantius, and I cannot refrain from extracting for my readers a short passage from his work in which the character of Sulpicius is very feelingly and appropriately set forth. "I dwell," says this man of like Christian spirit with that of the subject of his praise, "with delight on the lovely traits of the character of Sulpicius; and, as I would rather leave him in light than in shade, I will not dismiss him without some further notice of his good actions.

His virtues were those of the man and of the Gospel of Jesus Christ; his faults were those of a defective and erroneous view of Christianity, seen through the medium of a vicious ecclesiastical system."

The downward tendency of the virtuous mind of Sulpicius to the depths of a deluding and degrading superstition marred all his amiable qualities, and robbed them of their beneficial effect. The discipline which he imposed upon himself, and which he regarded it an indispensable duty to observe, exacted from him a sort of outrage upon his own person, and a form of penance and self-infliction which involved the necessary acts of scourging the flesh and macerating the frame by robbing it of its necessary support—a course of proceeding growing much into adoption in the fourth century. The solitary enthusiast built his claims to veneration among men and his title to heaven on the merits of these mortifications, as of essential and even sacramental efficacy.

In those days of excitement and excess, Sulpicius made frequent visits to Martin, Bishop of Tours, a man whose early career as a soldier was distinguished by many benevolent acts and splendid qualities, but whose character in the Christian Church, however, by the appearance of sanctity and self-denial, it attracted the homage of his contemporaries, has hardly credit for sound principles, or even honest purposes, in the deliberate judgment of a better-informed generation. The violences committed by himself upon his own body, and his utter renunciation as well of all the gifts of Providence as of all the comforts and even the decencies of life, wrought successfully upon ignorance and superstition. To this source we may trace the fame of his miraculous powers and performances, and that monstrous and disgusting accumulation of silly marvels, which, if not stained with fraud and imposture, have at least all the most glaring characteristics of fanatical and frantic delusion. It is possible that the great wonder-worker was enchanted by his own wand, and transported, by his own disordered imagination and the vehement credulity of others, into the belief of his being what he seemed to be. A healthy state of the understanding is all that is required to reduce the wonders related of Martin to the level of the lowest births of superstition. They may take their proper place among the cheats of that great impostor, who, in the legends and traditions of men, apart from the Scriptures of truth, finds his best allies, and the fittest vehicles for his fatal frauds.

The visits of Sulpicius above alluded to probably took place between the years 390 and 394 A.D. If Vigilantius was sometimes his companion, we may be allowed to conjecture that what was acted before him in and near the monastery of Martin at Marmontier, in the neighbourhood of Tours, may have had a contrary effect to what they were expected to produce. Being blessed with a direct and honest mind, aided by that good sense and probity which is generally more favourable to the operations of the judgment than capacities better adapted to shine among men, the scene of the monastery, the show of sanctity around it, the multitudes of sick and diseased coming to be healed by the holy man, or returning from the sacred spot having left their maladies behind them, were not things of a character to bring conviction and satisfaction to a mind like that of Vigilantius.

Arrived at this focus of scenical superstition and supernatural agency, Vigilantius, with his mind disposed to see things through a cautious medium, and with a sober distrust, would be likely rather to have his suspicions awakened than his imagination excited by the appearance of Martin, and the strange symbols of an unearthly ministry which surrounded his dwelling. The monks and hermits in their caverns and cells, uttering their penitential cries and pious ejaculations, some in the attitude of prayer, some prostrate before a cross, some embracing holy relics, and some inflicting on themselves the penalties of their sins by scourging and lacerating their bodies; Martin himself with a coarse and dirty garment, threadbare, and scarcely covering his emaciated and corpse-like figure—spectacles like these must, if viewed, as probably they were, by Vigilantius, have been lost upon him.

Lost, too, upon his indocile disposition must have been the communication made by the saint to Sulpicius, and probably to Vigilantius also, of the secret discourses held by the holy man with Agnes, and Thecla, and Mary, not forgetting the frequent visits of Paul and Peter. Vigilantius was Vigilantius still, in the undisturbed possession of himself in the midst of this spectacular sanctity. But I correct myself; this debasing mummery was not lost upon him; for it was probably the medium through which a salutary conviction was brought to his mind of the vanity of those works of supererogation which man has wrought out of his own invention to be the supplement of that which the dying words of the Saviour declared to be finished. The miracles recorded to have been achieved by Martin of Tours are very difficult of digestion, and probably the stomach of Vigilantius felt the duty oppressive.[1] Being bound, however, to his friend and patron by so many ties, and under the prevailing influence of his example, he was probably not altogether unmoved by the pretensions and performances of the Bishop of Tours, and the imposing apparatus of miraculous power which filled others with awe and astonishment. He could not at once throw off the fascination to which the mind of Sulpicius himself had so fully surrendered itself. Nor was it easy at once to repudiate stories, however fabulous and foolish, which had been so avouched and accredited by the testimony of one so esteemed.

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[1] The miraculous stories told by Sulpicius Severus in his 'Life of Martin' and his 'Dialogues on the Virtues of the Saints and of the Eastern monks,' are degrading to the Christian character, and affronting to common understanding. They could only have found a reception where a vicious training had silenced the voice of inquiry, and prepared the mind to submit to any imposition upon the senses to escape the pains of research and discrimination. In expatiating on the virtues of the Egyptian monks, we are gravely told by Sulpicius that a wolf which regularly visited a certain hermit at his supper, of which he was permitted to partake, happening to come when the hermit was absent, helped himself to the moderate share of one out of five loaves. On the return of his wronged benefactor, the grief and repentance of the wolf were shown by such evident signs, that no other proof of his guilt was needed. The restoration of sight to five cubs of a lioness, at the suit of another hermit, is from the same treasury of wonders; nor ought the gratitude of the lioness to be unrecorded, in presenting a skin to her benefactor for his clothing. I am about to relate, says Sulpicius, a surprising instance of obedience in these monks to their superiors. One of them declared that if his Abbot should command him to go into fire, into fire he would go. His obedience was put to the test. He cast himself into the flames; the flames retired from him "as they did from the three Hebrew children." He came out unhurt, and as cool as if covered with the dews of the morning.

The marginal synopsis in the 'Bibliotheca Patrum' of the great things related by Sulpicius Severus to have been performed by Martin, among others gives the following heads. He restores a catechumen to life—also restores to life a man who had hanged himself—compels a mob of rustics to stand still, and renders them powerless—stops the fall of a tree—arrests, by his presence, the progress of a fire—exposes himself with impunity to the stroke of a sword—cures a demoniac—eludes the stratagems of devils—heals a leper with a kiss—heals an eye with a touch—often in the company of angels—is cured by an angel—the devil invades his cell—various forms assumed by the devil—Martin tempted by the devil assuming the appearance of Christ.

Such is the disgusting enumeration of the fables recorded of St. Martin. The reader will think that enough of such a tissue of fraud and folly has been spread before him, but the narrative of the restoration to life of the catechumen alluded to in the above list, as it reaches the highest pitch in the climax of profanity and absurdity, shall not be withheld. "He (the catechumen) used to tell us," says Sulpicius, "that his spirit was conducted before the tribunal of the Judge eternal, and was about to receive his sentence, when two angels suggested that this was the soul for whom Martin had been praying. Upon which he was ordered back to be restored to life and to St. Martin." These despicable inventions not only load with suspicion and obloquy the memory of all the parties to them, both dupes and impostors, but cast reproach upon the age in which such unvarnished falsities could find reception and currency. They were received by those whom we call Fathers contemporary with the wonder-working saint himself; and, in times long posterior, the tomb of St. Martin was visited by those whose consciences could be quieted, and their spirits refreshed, by the odour of a sanctity which could not, it was probably considered, be less available in the grave than during life.

That stories fabricated with so little of the semblance of truth should have been honoured with the testimony of Sulpicius Severus, will cease to be matter of wonder when we look without prejudice at the character of the fourth century, apart from the spurious credit which a class of writers has bestowed upon it in furtherance of a system of divinity resting chiefly on the authority of man. It is to the contemporary narrative by Sulpicius Severus that we owe the documents of the marvellous biography of Martin of Tours. They are curious and instructive specimens of the gross credulity of the times to which they belong, and of the fatal tendency of superstition to suspend the operations of intelligence and common sense. The greater portion of the youth of Vigilantius appears to have been passed in an alternate intercourse with Sulpicius and Paulinus, and during that period, however his judgment might raise him above the practice and opinions of his age, his qualifications for a reformer could not expand while under an influence so calculated to repress his independent thoughts.

The biography of Vigilantius is only to be collected from scattered sources. He has left us no information concerning himself or his principles and opinions. But the controversies in which he was engaged, and the reproaches which he earned by a conduct which rebuked the bigotry, the superstition, and will-worship of his own times, entitles him to be recorded with honour. He shared with Jovinian the happy distinction of embracing a Christianity deduced from the oracles of God, rather than from the corrupt fountains of human dictation and authority. In or about the year 395, Vigilantius seems to have set out on a journey to Palestine and Egypt, having succeeded to the property acquired at the posting-house at Calagorris under his father's conduct and management. In his way he appears to have paid another visit to Paulinus, then Bishop of Nola, in Campania. Here he found his friend encompassed with his imaginary saints, martyrs, and mediators, enriching his sanctuaries with pictures and relics, and labouring to secure his salvation by acts of penance and self-mortification. Rigorous abstinence, periodical fastings, night watchings, coarse vestments, the accumulation of bones and rags of saints, and especially the hourly prostrations at the shrine of St. Felix,[1] left him neither time nor talent for other thoughts or occupations, and absorbed all the capacities of a mind once distinguished by the graces and refinements of the scholar, the poet, and the rhetorician. The saint worship of Paulinus had become by degrees little short of direct idolatry, and the ready reception which his mind afforded to every idle and ridiculous tale of wonder, to which fanaticism or imposture had given birth, clouded his judgment, and gave him up to the leading of a wandering and distempered fancy.

The church of Nola was at this time decorated with pictures, peopled with images, and polluted with a variety of vain and superstitious ceremonies in honour of St. Felix, for whom, and for whose relics, an apparatus of idolatrous worship was maintained by the credulous and deluded prelate. A multitude of idle ceremonies and pagan forms of adoration, smoking incense, and lights burning before the sepulchre of the saint, hymns in honour of his nativity, and recording the miracles by which his name and sanctuary were still illustrated after the lapse of a century, had become the sole entertainment and delight of Paulinus, when Vigilantius stopped at his residence to draw instruction from his lips, and encouragement from his example. In these expectations he was sadly disappointed; but there is reason for supposing that the specimens exhibited both by

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[1] Who this St. Felix was we have no certain information. He seems to have suffered much from the persecution under the Emperor Decius; which, however, he survived to spend his days with the highest reputation for sanctity at Nola, in voluntary poverty and self-mortification. To honour the memory of this patron saint the utmost range was given to religious romance. The wonders ascribed to his supernatural agency were little, if at all, inferior to those which have made the name of Martin of Tours so distinguished in legendary story. They are so contemptibly absurd as to be unworthy of being related even to amuse childish curiosity. But it is a fact, too singular to be omitted, that one of the most futile and foolish of these stories is told in verse by the accomplished but infatuated Paulinus. His enthusiastic veneration for his patron saint made him the willing auditor of every marvel related concerning the miracles wrought at his tomb, or in answer to prayers made at his shrine.

Sulpicius and Paulinus of the degrading and deforming effects of superstitious credulity, self-authorised observances, and ascetic austerity, might operate to determine the bearings and convictions of the sober mind of Vigilantius towards the path of prudence, moderation, and Scriptural authority.

There was so much, however, in the manners of the upright and amiable prelate of Nola to retain the homage and affection of his younger friend, that probably the struggle was severe between the rising convictions of Vigilantius and his habitual reverence. The Bishop of Nola was one of the most unexceptionable of the Fathers. His history is soon given, but the impression of his life and example was vivid and lasting. His early companion was Ausonius, the tutor and friend of the Emperor Gratian, to whom, as his senior in age, he always acknowledged, with lively gratitude, his obligations in the conduct of his early studies. They were equally devoted to the cultivation of general literature, and more especially to the graces of poetical composition, being in the constant habit of corresponding in verse, and submitting to each other their respective performances. But their habits, principles, and propensities were much at variance. Ausonius was a man of pleasure and of the world. He passed his vigorous years in the courts of Gratian and Theodosius, in a gay and ambitious course, half heathen and half Christian, and at length retired to literary ease and privacy, in his native city, Bordeaux. Paulinus, who was also born at Bordeaux, in the year 353, sought preferment at Rome, and rose so rapidly in his political career, that, while young, he was promoted to the consular rank. In middle life he became so deeply impressed with the truths of Christianity that he determined to enter the Church. Having been accordingly baptized and ordained a presbyter, he was soon distinguished by his piety, charity, and self-denial. Not long after his entering the Church, he was consecrated bishop of Nola, in Campania. His retiring from Rome and secular employments occasioned his separation from his friend and instructor Ausonius, who appears to have considered the loss of his society and correspondence as a heavy misfortune, which he makes the subject of bitter complaint in his poems and letters. Paulinus, as we may infer from some of his parting epistles, was as much affected as his friend by the necessity of a separation, to which he submitted as the necessary consequence of his conversion. He died in the year 431 A.D., at the advanced age of seventy-eight.

Such was Paulinus, Bishop of Nola, at whose residence Vigilantius rested for an interval on his way to the Eastern Churches; where the secluded and melancholy aspect of the homes both of Sulpicius and Paulinus was to be succeeded by a scene more animated by scholastic controversy, but exhibiting habits and manners in no degree characteristic of a purer piety. That the moderate and sober mind of Vigilantius contemplated the religious excesses and extravagancies of either Sulpicius Severus, or Paulinus of Nola, with approbation or even satisfaction, is not to be presumed; and indeed there is a letter[1] of Jerom which intimates the contrary; but the urbanity and simple manners which were combined with the austerities of both his kind patrons would probably, during the periods of his residence with them, tend much to soften his objections, if not to reconcile him altogether, to a system of piety and devotional exercises so superstitious, unsound, and distorted.

In the year 396 A.D. Vigilantius paid his visit to Jerom, then in the full career of those practices of self-mortification, and quarrel with domestic happiness and the charities of social life, which raised so high the reputation of his sanctity, and added so much to the weight and authority of his great abilities, as the champion of Church discipline and orthodoxy. To this celebrated man Vigilantius carried the recommendation of an epistle from Paulinus of Nola. At Bethlehem, in the cell of his monastery, Jerom was at this time located, amidst the charms of Nature, the delights of a luxuriant scenery, and the gifts of a bounteous Providence, all which were robbed of their blessings and comforts by the interposition of voluntary sufferings and self-imposed interdicts. Here, sequestered in a gloomy chamber, with a countenance devoid of all tenderness or complacency, eyes sunk in the sockets, cheeks channelled with tears, and a wasted figure, wrapped in a sordid vestment, Jerom came forth to receive the visit of Vigilantius. While all externally presented the character of a mortified man, alike indifferent to worldly vanities, pomps, and interests, with all the marks of penance and abstinence on his brow, yet, under the dejection of that brow, a vehement and vivid expression betrayed the irritable character of a mind wrought up to the most sensitive extreme of self-value, and imperiously claiming the homage he denounced.

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[1] Hieron. 'Opera,' 4, part ii. p. 277.

The sad symbols of a religion entrenched in its own deservings, glorying in its humiliations, and self-satisfied with its self-sacrifices, spread their gloom over the monastery and surrounding territory. All the sacred localities, consecrated by innumerable legends, resounded with dirges and the notes of penitential mourning. All wore the face of sorrow,—a community without the social principle, without reciprocity of feeling, without the commerce of benevolence, wherein each was challenging the other in the strife of self-renunciation, to issue in the triumphs of living, dying, and posthumous fraud. Here in this sacred region, once the scene of transactions far transcending all else which has been witnessed upon earth, but of which few were the traces which then presented themselves, amongst the shrines and chapels of saints, the credulity of Vigilantius was severely taxed. He was to take upon trust the identities of things which local legends, testimonies without proof, and unsupported tradition proposed to him for the exercise of his faith, and as the objects of such honour as was little short of adoration. The remains of the Cross,[1] of the wood of the manger, and of the bones of apostles or saints, with a hundred other similar curiosities equally valuable and equally authentic, were obtruded on the stranger, whose credulity was made to stagger under the mass of these supposititious baubles. The same absurdities had been witnessed by him with suspicion and distaste in the devotional extravagancies of Paulinus before the shrine of St. Felix, and amidst the fragments accumulated by him in his cabinet of relics; but reverence for the man, coupled with a sense of great personal obligation, had held him in a respectful forbearance. Jerom had nothing, either in the disposition or qualities of his mind, or in outward recommendation, to reconcile the sound and sober apprehensions of Vigilantius to these practices on the confidence of the determined believer. It seems probable, from a letter which followed him on his leaving Bethlehem or Jerusalem, that the commencement of the serious rupture which in the sequel converted this half-matured friendship into a very decided and notorious variance, had declared itself very soon after their first interview. Vigilantius had seen in the severe and captious monk much of the exercises and services of the body, with little, very little, of the fruits of the Spirit. On his visit to Jerusalem he was thrown into the company of Rufinus, and seems to have been confirmed, by a communication with him, in the aversion with which he had already begun to regard the sentiments and dogmas of Jerom, whose irritable qualities and acrimonious habits had been sharpened in his controversial attackson Helvidius and Jovinian.

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[1] [Four celebrated writers, Ambrose, Sulpicius, Sozomen, and Theodoret, all vouch for what was styled the "the invention" or discovery of the Cross on which the Saviour suffered. The three crosses of our Lord and of the malefactors were, according to their story, exhumed from underground. St. Ambrose gravely tells us that our Lord's was ascertained at once by the inscription being still attached to it; whilst Sulpicius ascribes the ascertainment of it to a miracle; for, according to him, a dead man was restored to life by being touched with it. Well may Salmasius exclaim, in his note upon Sulpicius, "Pudeat miseros tandem Christianos tam stultæ credulitatis et superstitionis tam vanæ."—Ed.]

One visit more of Vigilantius to Jerom before he finally left the Holy Land settled and decided their dissatisfaction with each other, which, though it did not break out into an open rupture until some time afterwards, was sufficiently indicated by their abrupt separation. The travels of Vigilantius after his departure from Bethlehem, and the places visited by him on his way to his own country, are known only through the medium of Jerom's correspondence. From this source of information we collect with some certainty that he visited Egypt, and, after sojourning awhile in Alexandria, proceeded to the shores of Italy, and from thence by the Cottian Alps. There is reason to suppose that during his stay in Alexandria, in which all the controversies then agitating the Christian world were in a manner concentred, and in his whole journey by land and sea, he was endeavouring to qualify himself by study and inquiry to maintain his opinions as an antagonist of Jerom. These opinions were, no doubt, soon carried to the ears of the angry monk while concocting his revenge in the cell of his monastery. After landing at some Italian port, Vigilantius paid a transient visit to Paulinus at Nola, to whom he was the bearer of a letter from Jerom. In this letter the total abdication by Paulinus of all his worldly possessions was urged with so little moderation as to call for the sort of apology from the same unsparing censurer, which was made in a subsequent letter.[1] From Nola Vigilantius proceeded, through the Cottian Alps, to the spot of his nativity on the Gallic side of the Pyrenean mountains, in the year 397; as we gather from Jerom's notable epistle to Riparius, written a few years afterwards, in which he complains of the clamour raised by his opponent *inter Adriæ fluctus Cottiique regis Alpes.*

In the country bordering on the Cottian Alps and extending into Southern Gaul and the plains of Lombardy, lived probably the ancestors of the Waldenses; nor is it unlikely that Vigilantius had ground to expect to find a people inhabiting those parts who held opinions opposed to those maintained by Jerom on the celibacy of the clergy, and other subjects of external obligation enforced by the rigid dogmas of that ascetic recluse. To converse with persons reputed to lean to sentiments in accordance with the sacred Scriptures on these practical points, Vigilantius might not improbably have determined to go to his own country by way of the Cottian Alps; nor has it with less likelihood been conjectured that the tenets, then in such prevalence, on clerical vows, relic and saint worship, and prayers to and in behalf of departed men, were sifted and rejected in the various colloquies which detained the traveller among these inquiring people; and further, that this intercourse with them, though transient, may very possibly have laid the foundation, deep and strong, of the truths maintained by their persecuted posterity against the tyranny and frauds of papal Rome. It has even been asserted by Romish writers, that to Vigilantius may be, in great part, attributed the nonconformity of the Alpine heretics.

After his return from his visit to Palestine and Alexandria, Vigilantius appears to have sat down, in the place of his nativity, to his sacred studies; and here the letter from Jerom finds him, in which, with his accustomed, or more than his accustomed severity, that overbearing disputant defends himself from the imputation of having adopted some of the opinions of Origen;

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[1] "Ego enim tanta volumina, præ frequentia commeantium et peregrinorum turbis, relegere non potui; et ut ipsi probavere præsentes, longo tentus incommodo, vix diebus quadragesimæ, quibus ipsi proficiscebantur, respirare cœpi. Unde si paragrammata repereris, quæ sensum legentis impediant, non mihi debes imputare, sed tuis, et imperitiæ notariorum librariorumque incuriæ; qui scribunt non quod inveniunt, sed quod intelligunt, et dum alienos errores emendare nituntur, ostendunt suos."—Hier. 'Op.' 4, part ii. p. 578.

and wherein, after telling him that his tongue deserved to be torn in pieces for some of his opinions, he recommends him to repent in sackcloth and ashes, and to wash out his wickedness with perpetual tears; if such impiety could hope to be forgiven, and might obtain pardon when, according to the error of Origen, the devil should obtain his.[1]

The various letters of Jerom to Helvidius, Jovinian, Vigilantius, and even to Augustin, leave the fact unquestionable that he was a man of great infirmity of temper, disposed alike to depreciate the merits of others, and unduly to exalt his own. To the exercise of his vituperative talents it must be owned that we are indebted for some of his most vigorous productions. Few of his corresponding friends were without some experience of the rough discipline of his pen. Rufinus says he spared none, neither monk nor maiden. Ambrose, and Didymus, and Chrysostom himself, shared his reproaches. To the Father last mentioned he ascribes flagitious proceedings, and visits with the severest censure his receiving Origenists into his confidence. Paulinus had not made sacrifices enough to satisfy him, nor could his equability of temper exempt him from the reprimands of the general censor. Those who submitted to the obligation of celibacy on the ostensible ground of religious abstinence were among the rare objects of his eulogy. The marriages of ecclesiastics, and the second marriages of any, under any circumstances, fell equally under his stern rebuke—

> "Defaming, as impure, what God declares
> Pure; and commands to some; leaves free to all."

Provoked by the moderate and rational views of Jovinian, he breaks out, in his writings against him, into gross and unwarranted sallies against the matrimonial estate; charging it with a degree of corruption and pollution, and exalting, above all comparison with it, the felicity of virgins. His opinions on this subject appear to have arisen out of the self-sufficiency of his own brain, which led him to consult his own fervid impressions and prejudices rather than the teaching of divine wisdom. There has existed no more fertile source of dishonour to the Church of God than this violence offered to the provisions of his providence for the construction of society among his rational creatures. The unnatural interdict, where it has prevailed in the Church of

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[1] Hieron. Ep. xxxvi.

Christ, has been fatally subversive of the character of his ministers. The annals of ecclesiastical history are replete with the most revolting proofs of these degrading consequences.

"We see," said Luther in his Commentary on Genesis, "that the papists are nothing moved by what is there told us—that God created them male and female; for they so bind and entangle themselves by their vows as not to acknowledge themselves to be male and female. They are no ways affected by what is written, that God led Eve to Adam, and Adam said, 'This is bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh;' 'therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh.' Nothing moved are they by the promise and benediction, 'Increase and multiply;' or by the precept, 'Honour thy father and thy mother.' Nor does the consciousness of their origin, as springing from the union of the sexes, weigh anything with them. But passing by all these considerations with neglect and contempt, they compel their priests, their monks, and their nuns, to live in perpetual celibacy, as if the connection of marriage were condemned by the writings of Moses. The Holy Spirit looks with purer eyes on these things than the pope. He has no shame in recording the coupling of husband and wife, which these saints condemn as foul and impure."

In the opinion of our great reformer, the popish injunction of celibacy in the clergy shows the devil's malice towards the creatures of God: and this malice is well attested in its fruits. The traces and examples of its horrid results are very plain to observation. They come before us in the clear testimonies of books and documents, among which that of Udalric, Bishop of Augsburg, referred to by Luther, has a strong claim to the credit of impartiality, he having been enrolled by Pope John XV. among those to whom the Christians might lawfully address prayers and worship.[1]

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[1] The passage in Luther on Genesis (c. iv. 1) is thus expressed in the original. "Testatur Sanctus Udalricus, Episcopus Augustanus, postquam cælibatum Gregorius Pontifex stabilitum vellet, et interdixisset usu conjugum etiam illis, qui jam ante decretum de cælibatu conjuges essent facti, cum forte piscari vellet in vivario quod Romæ habebat, inventa in eo esse amplius sex mille capitum infantilium. Scribit autem idem Udalricus vehementer consternatum eo spectaculo Gregorium, impiam de cælibatu sanctionem iterum sustulisse. Sed successores Gregorii facile et fœditatem hujus rei et piam abolitionem decreti de cælibatu suppresserunt, cum ipsi quoque existimarent non ad opes solum parandas

Jerom appears to have learned in the schools of heathen philosophy to use the artifices of rhetoric, as well as other disguises of speech, in which he not unfrequently violated the sanctity of truth. He defends himself by the examples of Plato, Xenophon, Aristotle, and others of heathen celebrity, and seems to think himself more fully justified by the similar practice of Christian controversialists, as Origen, Methodius, Eusebius, Apollinaris, and others, who made use, as he says, of "*problematibus lubricis*," and hesitates not to bring Tertullian, Cyprian, Lactantius, and Hilary into the same category of writers, who often allowed themselves to advance what they knew to be not true when necessary to promote the success of their argument.

This laxity concerning truth, which passed under the name of *οικονομία* in the Greek, and *dispensatio* in the Latin language, and sometimes *officiosum mendacium*, where it was conceived to be for the good of the Church, was practised and even defended by many eminent Christian writers of the fourth century. It had chiefly footing in the Greek Church, and even Chrysostom was not afraid to maintain that a falsehood was to be justified where it was to promote a good and sacred end. It was considered a pious fraud, and sanctified by its object. The principle of dissimulation propagates itself and assumes a variety of forms. There was claimed under it a licence of citing passages from authors, with little or no regard to the correctness of citation or appropriation. And this we find to be chargeable on Jerom

cælibatum aptum esse, sed etiam ad dignitatem conciliandam. Simile exemplum," adds Luther, "nostra ætate accidit, cum moniales in Austriæ vico Closter Neumburg propter turpem vitam cogerentur mutare locum, et monasterium Franciscanis habitandum concessum esset, atque illi pro sua commoditate quædam ædificia mutarent, inventæ sunt in fundamentis novis duodecim ollæ, quarum singulæ cadaver infantis habebant.

"Hujusmodi infinita alia passim acciderunt. Recte igitur Gregorius, qui, sicut Episcopus Udalricus refert, verbum Pauli eleganter mutavit: Paulus inquit, melius est nubere quam uri; sed ego addo, melius est nubere quam mortis occasionem præbere.

"Romæ quoque propter copiam puerorum expositiorum erecta sunt monasteria, quorum pontifex pater dicitur, et antecedunt eum proximi in processionibus publicis. Taceo infinita alia, quæ dicere animus reformidat."

In his exposition of Genesis xix. Luther thus speaks: "Vidi ego Romæ tanquam sanctos adoratos quosdam Cardinales, qui consuetudine mulierum fuerunt contenti. Non igitur ibi occulte nec privatim, sed publice, infanda flagitia committuntur, exemplo et auctoritate principum, et totius civitatis." Luth. Exeget. Opera Lat., Tom. III. Erlang, 1529.

The English reader will find an account of the like discoveries made in the monasteries of this country in 1535.—Burnet, 'Reform.,' book III. [See also 'Hallam's Middle Ages,' vol. II. Part 1, e.g., and his extract from 'Clemangis.'—Ed.]

by his own confession. In the lectures given to catechumens the texts of Scripture are often strained and tampered with, or disguised under mystical, allegorical, or symbolical interpretation, to suit a special purpose. But although these unworthy habits had principally a footing in the Greek Church, it is due to the great Basil to record his decided disapproval of them, expressed in his monastic rules. "Christ," says that eminent Father, "declares that a lie is of the devil,[1] and makes no distinction between lies."

It is thus that Jerom argues on this subject in one of his epistles to Augustin on the difference between them as to St. Paul's reproof of St. Peter:[2] "You assert, in opposition to my opinion, that the Apostle's rebuke was genuine, and not a mere feint for promoting their common object—the dispensation of the truth of the Gospel; and that I ought not to teach that the Scriptures ever authorise a falsehood: to which I answer, that it became your discretion and candour to read the humble preface to my 'Commentaries,' which speaks my sentiments on this subject. If anything appeared to you, in the exposition I have attempted to give in this matter, to be censurable, it would have been in better accordance with your erudition to inquire whether what I have written was to be found in the Greek commentators; that if none of them should be found maintaining the same opinion with myself, it might be justly condemned as one for which I stand solely responsible."

What has been above produced must appear to plain men very strange reasoning, involving a confession which throws great ambiguity over all the statements and declarations of Jerom. Thus to retreat upon others, when pressed by strong objections to any of his positions or expositions, was too much the habit of this very erudite Father. If we are never to be certain whether Jerom is delivering his own judgment or the judgment of others until the Greek commentators are looked through, the authority of this learned man must, indeed, lose much of its weight, and be impaired in its power of producing conviction in the minds of his readers. The licence which Jerom asserts to belong to disputation—of adopting almost any argument for the sake carrying a point—was frequently exhibited in his own practice. It was one thing, as he says in a letter to

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[1] John v. 44.

[2] Gal. ii. 11, 12.

Pammachius, to write *δογματικῶς*, and another to write *γυμναστικῶς*. After such an avowal, he had hardly a right to complain of Augustin's treatment of his opinions on this subject as lending colour to plausible mendacity; nor is the conclusion to be drawn from his statement sufficiently avoided by the words in which he repels the imputation in his letter to Augustin—"Do not think me to be the patron of a lie, who am, indeed, the follower of Him who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. It can never be that I, who have so long been a worshipper of truth, could so suddenly change my character, and enter into the service of falsehood."

We have it from the express avowal of Jerom himself that he was accustomed to make free use of the works of Origen, Didymus, Apollinaris, and others in the tissue of his own compositions, without naming the authors themselves. And in borrowing from Origen he is chargeable with no small inconsistency. He was the great ally of Epiphanius and Theophilus in the war maintained by those prelates against the opinions of Origen, and quarrelled irreconcileably with Rufinus, once distinguished by his special favour and friendship, for promulgating in a Latin translation what were regarded by him as the most dangerous of Origen's writings. Such a vacillating and incongruous practice one cannot but regard as being part of that unsound and infirm structure of the moral principle observable among many of the Fathers, degradingly contrasting with their high Christian profession. By Jerom in particular was assumed the licence of interlacing with his own the opinions of other men if conducing to the point for which he was contending, without holding himself responsible for their unsoundness when brought into question.

But after making all necessary deductions from the dignity and deserts of Jerom on the score of prejudice and passion, our obligations to him remain very great, not only for his admirable contributions to the stores of sacred learning in all its departments, but for his strenuous and efficacious advocacy of the truth, as it is set forth in the oracles of God. Lessons of practical piety and discriminating Christian prudence not seldom flowed from his able pen. Nor is there a deficiency of counsel dispersed through his works, to restrain presumptuous men from rearing an edifice of theology on a foundation not laid on the Bible, with the wood, hay, and stubble of vain traditions and their own vainer devices. "Do not suffer yourselves," says this erudite Father, in the spirit of prophetic warning, "to be seduced by pretended apostolical traditions." "If hypocritical priests say to you, 'Listen to us, and follow us,' answer them, 'It is not astonishing that you should wish us to worship your traditions and your statutes as other nations worship their idols; but to *us* God has given the law and the testimony of the Scriptures.'" "It is the first mark of a heretic that he requires you to believe him on all points and on his word alone." In a letter to Theophilus, the Patriarch of Alexandria, he says, "I place the Apostles in a light of distinction from all other writers; they always speak the truth: the others err like men."[1] "Others, both Greeks and Latins, have erred in points of faith."[2] In another place, speaking of ecclesiastical writers generally, and of their faults and errors, he says, "It may be, they have erred out of mere ignorance; or, they may have written in some other sense than that in which we understand them; or, their writings may have been corrupted through the ignorance of transcribers; or, before the appearance of Arius, they let some things fall from them innocently and with less caution than they might have used, and in such terms as must needs have exposed them to the calumny of perverse men."[3] In another place, "We ought not, according to the example of the scholars of Pythagoras, to have regard to the prejudicated opinion of the teacher, but to the weight and reason of the thing taught."

Observations of the same sensible cast are of frequent occurrence throughout the writings of Jerom. In a letter to Paulinus he takes occasion to pass his judgment on the qualities of the works composed by the most eminent Latin ecclesiastical writers, in which he brings characteristically before us Tertullian, Cyprian, Lactantius, Hilary, and others, and manifests much critical discernment; and a similar obligation has been conferred by his pen on ecclesiastical literature in his catalogue of illustrious writers—an historical compendium of such as have distinguished themselves as authors from the earliest age of Christianity, translated into Greek by Sophronius.

Many of the letters of Jerom are worthy to be consulted by him who desires to draw from the wells of Christian experience truths of practical value ; nor will the labour of travelling through Jerom's works be unrewarded, where the heart and understanding are sincerely engaged in searching the Scripture and gathering the fruits of Divine instruction. His letter to Nepotian, the nephew of Heliodorus, his early associate, on his entering upon the sacred ministry, is a composition marked by much sound judgment and solid piety. He reminds him of the import of the Greek word cleros, or clergy, signifying either their own dedication to God as His lot or portion, or their claiming God as their own lot or portion ; and, upon the strength of that lofty designation, he charges him to rise above worldly interests, and to consider well the service in which he has engaged himself. His precepts are well calculated to exalt the standard to which both the preaching and life of a servant of God should be conformed ; the aim of the one being wholly directed to the exposition of the mysteries and morals of religion, and of the other, by the light of example, to give grace and attraction to the sacerdotal character. The motive which suggested the letter to Nepotian was frustrated by the immature death of the young man ; but the letter remains a testimony to the wisdom of Jerom, and an instructive gift to after ages. The death of Nepotian drew from the pen of Jerom a letter of consolation to the uncle Heliodorus, wherein he recalls the many instances in pagan story of the dread of death overcome by men living in spiritual ignorance, to stimulate those to exercise a superior philosophy who have imbibed the lessons of eternal truth. The uncertainty and unsatisfactoriness of our mortal state is enlarged upon with an elegance of pathos which, in the balance of conflicting qualities, may be weighed against the errors of an impetuous temper.

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[1] Hier. Ep. 62.

[2] Ep. ad Pammach. et Ocean., 34 § 3.

[3] Hier. l. 2, § 7, Apol. contra Rufinum.

His dialogues against the Pelagians exhibit in the main very sound doctrine, and may be considered, in conjunction with the arguments and expositions of Augustin, as comprising a complete defence of Catholic doctrine from a heresy more in league than any other with those imaginary holds which hide from the heart its real danger and only dependence.

We now take leave of Jerom, with a ready acknowledgment of the debt of gratitude we owe to his memory for the entire dedication of his great learning and accomplishments to the sound exposition of the Scriptures, and the illustration and defence of saving truth.

In turning from Jerom to Augustin the Christian character is seen under a different aspect; not essentially variant, for the principles furnished by a religion of heavenly origin and perfect holiness must be substantially the same in all its genuine professors, though complexionally and practically varied by the circumstances of life, and altered in form and exterior by the influence of habit and temperament. But, interesting as it may be to compare Augustin with Jerom, more important instruction may be gathered by comparing Augustin with himself. The contrarieties observable in the constitution of the mind of man, on which Pascal has reasoned with so much solidity of judgment, disclosing the vestiges of primitive excellence in conjunction with the fatal effects of the fall by transgression, were affectingly exemplified in the person of Augustin—throughout the vigorous period of his life the slave of his concupiscence, and at the same time suffering under the severest chastenings of an awakened conscience; breathing, in the midst of pollution, the aspirations of his better nature and the sighs of a self-condemning spirit. The struggles of an accusing conscience with the prevalence of inward impurity, made him more experimentally sensible than others of the weakness of the human will, and of its inadequacy to the requirements of the soul, unless grace be its precursor and prompter.

He was born on the 13th of November, in the year 355, at Tagaste, now a poor little village hardly noticed in modern geography, but, at the time of Augustin's nativity, a city and bishopric of Numidia in Africa. His father, whose name was Patricius, was a person of some distinction, whose habits, if we judge of him by what occurs respecting him in the Confessions of the son, were far from regular and correct; nor does his temper appear to have been under better control. To his wife, Monica, the virtuous mother of him whose life and character we are now entering upon, he was the author of frequent troubles and trials till a short time previous to his death, when he received baptism as a convert to the Christian faith and commenced a better course.

Augustin was put to school at an early age by his father at Madauris, from which place, after making there a considerable progress in the rudiments of grammatical learning, he was removed to Carthage, the metropolis of the province, where he was instructed in rhetoric, the aim of his father being principally to accomplish him as a pleader and orator. His education was, however, very desultory, and often intermitted from the difficulty felt by the father of supporting the necessary expenses of his schooling. Of the habits of his juvenility we are copiously informed by that extraordinary book entitled the 'Confessions of St. Augustin,' which has every attestation, as well as every internal characteristic, of genuineness, and may on the whole be regarded as the most honest piece of autobiography extant. He begins with the original stain on his nature, and unveils all the sins of his childhood. That all the evil propensities which he imputes to himself did exist in him in all their absolute corruption, is established upon his own testimony; but it is probable the self-corrective purity of his later years aggravated his own sentence on his early delinquencies, and induced him to place himself, perhaps with no sufficient reason, below the standard of his contemporaries. He seems to have been naturally of a very sanguine temperament, subject to impulses so difficult to keep under due control and management, as to yield only to the mastery with which his spirit was endowed by his entire conversion to the true faith. He describes the characteristics of his childhood in these expressive words: "I sinned in doing contrary to the precepts of my parents and masters; for I might afterwards have made good use of my learning, which they were desirous I should obtain, whatsoever purpose they had in it. I disobeyed them, not out of the desire of choosing better courses, but out of the love of play, aspiring to be the proud winner at all sports, and to have my ears tickled with fictitious fables; a perilous curiosity sparkling through my eyes as to the shows and plays frequented by my elders, the exhibitors whereof are esteemed to gain so much honour by it that almost all wish the like to their own children."

In the Confessions of Augustin we have an autographic history of his early life,[1] minutely told as to all his fluctuations of thought and feeling during the long period which preceded his conversion and baptism. His infancy was characterised by his love of play in a degree beyond his young companions; and to gratify this propensity he appears by his own account to have suffered few scruples to stand in the way. To deceive his parents and tutors he was often guilty of falsehood, and he acknowledges himself to have committed an act of theft, in robbing, in company with some of his idle associates, a neighbour's orchard of some pears, which was probably a solitary case, as it appears to have made a deep impression on his memory, and to have been always viewed by him with great self-reproach. He relates the anecdote in his Confessions with every circumstance of aggravation, particularly insisting upon the pleasure he felt in the mere act of thieving, without any gratification derived from the thing stolen, of which he was in no want, having plenty and better at home. Bad as is the account which he gives of his boyhood, his maturer age gave no indications of a higher degree of moral rectitude. His youth was passed much in the society of the sensual and profligate; and yet a conflict between these evil propensities and a clear percipience of what was honest and becoming, accompanied with an awful apprehension of the Divine displeasure, kept his mind in a perpetual struggle, and mingled many bitters in his cup of pleasure. The young lawyers or pleaders at the bar were among the worst of his associates, from whom he learned to speak lightly of the Holy Scriptures on account of the simplicity of their style and expression. But the companions most fatal to his principles and his peace were the Manicheans, to whose gross and dangerous superstition he surrendered his reason during the first stage of his mature existence. His sanguine mind was in constant vibration between his better nature and his propensity to gross indulgences; and the consciousness he felt of the inward struggle between these opposite attractions disposed him to listen with favour to the hypothesis of two contending powers of light and darkness, to whom all the good and evil that prevailed on earth were respectively to be considered as owing their origin.

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[1] In lib. II. c. 6, of his 'Retractations' he writes thus of his Confessions. "Confessionum mearum libri XIII., et de malis et de bonis meis, Deum laudant justum et bonum, atque in eum excitant humanum intellectum et affectum: interim, quod ad me attinet, hoc in me egerunt cum scriberentur, et agunt cum leguntur; quid de illis alii sentiant, ipsi viderint; multis tamen fratribus eos multum placuisse, et placere, scio. A primo usque ad decimum de me scripti sunt; in tribus cæteris de Scripturis sanctis, ab eo quod scriptum est 'in principio fecit Deus cælum et terram' usque ad Sabbati requiem. In quarto, cum de amici morte animi mei miseriam confiterer, dicens quod anima nostra

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quodammodo facta fuerat ex duabus, 'et ideo,' inquam, 'forte mori metuebam, ne totus ille moreretur, quem multum amaveram;' quæ mihi quasi declamatio levis quam gravis confessio videtur, quamvis utcunque temperata sit hæc ineptia in eo quod additum est, *forte*. Et in libro tertio decimo quod dixi firmamentum factum inter spiritales aquas superiores, et corporales inferiores, non satis considerate dictum est; res autem in abdito est valde."

It was towards the end of the third century that Manes, a Persian or Chaldean of a very wild and eccentric genius, and said by some to have been one of the Magi, adventured to be the founder of a new religion by blending the principles of the Persian theology with the doctrines of Christianity; grounding his pretensions upon the assertion that the way of salvation was incompletely set forth in the Gospel, it being the design of Christ to leave it to be more fully explained and expanded by the Paraclete, by which name he himself and his office were designated. Viewed in the pure light of Bible Christianity, the Manichean system seems so grossly absurd as to be altogether unworthy of attention, much less of investigation; but immoral associations, desultory studies, long familiarity with the Gentile philosophy, and the habits of a teacher of rhetoric, acting with their joint influence upon a mind naturally ardent, eager, and ambitious, rendered Augustin too open to vague and visionary impressions. According to the wild theory of Manes, the Prince of Darkness prevailed so far in his struggle with the Author of Good, as, notwithstanding the defeat which he finally sustained, to have brought away, and blended with his own grosser element of depraved matter, such a portion of the Divine light and moral excellence as was sufficient to become the stock out of which the human race was formed and compounded, being of two characters or souls, the one sensitive and concupiscent, the other rational and immortal.

And this was the creed which the mind of Augustin could, for a season, condescend to embrace. It is probable he gave but a doubting assent to the morbid fancies into which that creed was expanded. It is difficult to imagine that his intelligent and inquiring capacity could ever have been in accordance with opinions such as the following: The Great Author of Good has only a divided empire with the Author of Evil, to whom especially the human race and the earth they inhabit owed their creation, and who, by mingling contaminating matter with so much of the pure substance of celestial origin as had been captured by him in his wars with heaven, or, in other words, by immuring heavenly souls in material bodies, had given to the Most Holy One the task of separating the good from the bad, the pure from the impure, the captive souls from their bodily prisons—a work delegated to two Transcendent Beings produced from Himself, Christ and the Holy Spirit. Christ, not joined to a real body, but having the form and appearance of a man, is sent down to complete this rescue—appears among the Jews, by whom, instigated by the Prince of Darkness, He is crucified, that is, appears to be crucified, for so, in reality, He was not. His mission being accomplished He returns to heaven, leaving it to His Apostles to propagate His religion, and to the Paraclete especially to expound and extend His doctrines, and this Paraclete was Manes, the Persian sage. The twofold process of purification after death, by the sacred fire and sacred water, consummates the scheme of man's salvation according to the Manichean method. And we cannot wonder that Augustin, after his conversion to the true faith, should have felt himself called upon for the fullest exposure of a blasphemous apostasy which had led him so far out of the way in his early studies in divinity.

In the midst of his Manichean follies he records the dream of his mother, in one of those passages of his 'Confessions' wherein his mind seems to be in converse with God, in that secret tabernacle of his bosom wherein his petitions were so frequently preferred. It was when his mother had withdrawn herself from and refused to dwell or sit at the same table with him, on account of the heresy into which he had fallen, that she saw in her sleep herself standing on a certain battlement, a beautiful young man coming towards her with a cheerful countenance and smiling upon her, while she was reflecting with a sorrowful heart on her son's aberrations. He demanded the cause of her sadness and daily weeping. "It is," she answered, "for the perdition into which my son is falling." Whereupon he bade her to rest contented, directing her to raise her eyes and look; and behold, where she herself was, there was her son also, and turning her look aside, she saw him standing by her on the same battlement. It was a dream not to be forgotten, and the account of his conversation with his mother upon it follows in the form of an apostrophe to his Maker.

To this vision the mother and son gave contrary interpretations. To the son it appeared to indicate that his mother's opinions would one day coincide with his own; but the mother drew a contrary inference, and the joy of the conviction in which her mind rested was not unaccompanied by sympathetic emotions in the bosom of the young Augustin, though it was not till about nine years after this incident that Augustin was able entirely to shake off the fetters of this false belief. His thoughts, however, during all this period, were in a fluctuating state between truth and error. He felt an increasing dissatisfaction with the Manichean teachers; and when at length he broke loose from their trammels, the gross absurdities of their tenets were seen and felt by none with greater abhorrence. His gradual emancipation was not unobserved by his mother, and among the incidents by which her mind was cheered was what occurred in an interview with a certain bishop, who, being importuned by her entreaties to discourse with her on the subject nearest her heart, and witnessing her much weeping, "Go," said he, "and God bless thee; for it is not possible that the son of tears like these should perish."

His profession of a teacher of rhetoric and forensic advocate was not unstained with the practice which has always in certain degrees been imputable to it, of postponing the obligations of truth and justice to the success of the cause in hand. His mind was long wavering and vibrating between various impulses and attractions; and among the causes of his discomposure was his addiction to the delusions and deceits of astrology. Circumstances, however, in the meantime, recalled him in some degree from his infatuation. His sorrow for the loss of a friend, aggravated by remorse for having unsettled his mind with his own unsatisfactory opinions (which produced only a temporary injury, for his friend died in the Catholic faith), was not without its proper sanatory effect. From the nineteenth to the twenty-eighth year of his age, he represents himself to have been under gross delusions, and to have been active in deluding others. But as years and experience advanced, his maturer judgment began to emerge from his Manichean infatuation. His discussions with the great oracle of that false system tended greatly to disabuse him. Faustus was a shallow advocate with an imposing verbosity, and the more strenuously he argued in support of his creed, the more it lost its power over the understanding of Augustin.

During these struggles of his vigorous mind with the shackles of an heretical creed, Augustin acquired great reputation at Carthage as a teacher of rhetoric. His school was the most celebrated in that quarter. Many of his scholars became his attached friends, and in particular Alipius, whom he favoured with his especial confidence, and who afterwards, as bishop of Tagaste, became eminent in the Church of Christ. It appears, however, that the general habits of his scholars were such as to make him weary of his profession in the city of Carthage, and to determine him to leave that place for Rome, where he expected his school to be better attended, and his learning and ability to be more adequately appreciated. The success of his teaching at Rome brought him a great accession of fame; but in the description of his scholars the change does not seem to have been much for the better. His labours were robbed of their due reward by deceit and stratagem, and Rome gave him so little contentment that the professorship of rhetoric at Milan, where the Emperor Valentinian then kept his court, becoming vacant, he was easily induced to offer himself as a candidate for that chair, to which, having given a specimen of his talents before Symmachus, the Governor of Rome, he was duly promoted. This was the turning point of his life; for at Milan he soon became as much distinguished as at Carthage and Rome, and there availed himself of every opportunity of cultivating the regard of Ambrose, and attending his far-celebrated discourses. Under this ministry the heresy of the Manichees gradually lost its hold of his mind, and receded before the truth as scripturally expounded by the learned Archbishop. His opinions, however, continued for some time to fluctuate between the orthodox faith and his long-cherished misconceptions. It is remarkable that the great impediment in the way of a purer belief was the difficulty which he had in conceiving of God as a spiritual Essence, without corporeal extension.[1] His mind could not for some time apprehend Him but as invested with material shape and substance. After some study as a catechumen, these gross images were driven from his thoughts,[2] together with the doctrine of ascribing sin to a necessary independent cause, and an eternal evil principle.

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[1] This gross conception of Deity was a stumbling stone in the way of others among the early Fathers. Thus Tertullian: "Omne quod est, corpus est sui generis; nihil est incorporale nisi quod non est."—Tertull. 'De Carne Christi.' "Ut concedam interim esse aliquid incorporale, de substantiis duntaxat; quum ipsa substantia corpus sit rei cujusque."—'Adv. Hermogen.' c. 35. And further still: "Quis enim negabit Deum corpus esse, etsi Deus Spiritus est? Spiritus enim corpus sui generis in sua effigie."—'Adv. Prax.' c. 7.

[2] When his opinions became settled on the side of orthodox Christianity, he was strenuous in the assertion of an opposite theory. In his dialogue, 'De Quantitate Animæ,' he strongly affirms its immateriality. In writing to Jerom

While the sentiments of Augustin were in the process of purification, his mother, having ventured herself on the sea, and encountered a stormy voyage, came first to Rome, and afterwards to Milan, where her son received her with great joy, hers being equally great to find him no longer a Manichee, though not yet a baptized Catholic. What she now desired, and wept and prayed for, was that he should settle his belief on the doctrines preached by Ambrose. Still, however, the conversion of Augustin was incomplete; he yet stumbled at the doctrine of the incarnation. He acknowledged the perfect man in Christ; not the body of a man only, but very man, with a rational soul; but that it was God who thus became perfect man, was for a time a matter of offence to him. In this particular he was more advanced, however, than his friend Alipius, who was for some time halting in the error of Apollinaris, till these eminent friends finally met together, after their several difficulties were overcome, in the unclouded atmosphere of evangelical truth. Augustin, however, did not reach this consummation until, having perused some of the works of the most celebrated Platonists, he was exercised by their philosophy in the contemplation and study of invisible things, and was enabled to make a due comparison between the divinity taught in their dry discourses, and the soul-comforting doctrines of the blessed Gospel. On the results of this comparison he has left us his spiritual comments, in chapter xxi. of book VII. of his 'Confessions,' which may be expressed in English in the following terms:

"What shall wretched man do? Who shall deliver him from the body of this death?[1] but only Thy grace through Jesus Christ our Lord, whom Thou hast begotten co-eternal with Thyself, and possessedst in the beginning of Thy ways;[2] in whom the prince of this world found nothing worthy of death, yet killed he Him; whereby the handwriting was blotted out which was contrary to us. None of all this do these Platonic writings contain. Those pages can show nothing of this; nothing of this face of piety, those tears of compassion, that sacrifice of Thine;

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he says, "Incorpoream quoque esse animam, etsi difficile tardioribus persuaderi potest, mihi tamen fateor esse persuasum." — Augustini 'Opera,' tom. II. fo. 30.

[1] Rom. vii. 24.

[2] Prov. viii. 22.

[3] Col. ii. 14.

a troubled spirit, a broken and contrite heart;[1] the salvation of Thy people, the spouse, the city, the earnest of the Holy Ghost, the cup of our Redemption. No man sings there, 'Shall not my soul wait upon God, seeing that from Him cometh my salvation? He only is my rock and my salvation; He is my defence; I shall not be greatly moved.' No man in those books hears Him calling, 'Come unto Me all ye that labour.'[2] They scorn to learn of Him, because He is 'meek and lowly in heart' (*v.* 29); for 'these things hast Thou hid from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.' It is one thing from the woody top of a mountain to see the native land of peace, not finding the way thither,[3] and another to keep on the way conducting to it."

In this state of near approach to what was holy and true, and on the very threshold of his complete conversion, he sought the encouragement and aid of Simplicianus, a venerable Christian, to whom Ambrose himself was indebted for his first instructions. To Simplicianus it was matter of rejoicing that the Platonic school, rather than others so full of the vain deceits and enticements of the world, had engaged his studies; inasmuch as with the Platonists God and His Word were at least obscurely kept in view. By him Augustin was informed of the confession of the truth by the celebrated Victorinus, one of the most accomplished orators of his time at Rome, and who had been honoured with a statue in the Forum. After some conversations with Simplicianus, Augustin proceeded, with vacillating steps, but with gradual approaches, to the blessedness of a full assurance of the truth. The work of grace was now conspicuous in his sentiments, and a happy consummation was near at hand. Alipius, his companion in his inquiries, was at this juncture living under the same roof with him, in the country house of their common friend Verecundus. Here they were joined by Nebridius, who had also lately embraced the truth, and of whose amiable character and discreet bearing Augustin speaks in great admiration, as being very diligent in the pursuit of the best studies and objects, and then occupied, in compliance with the wishes and persuasions of the party assembled at the house of Verecundus, in giving private instructions in Christian doctrine to that distinguished person, and in adding him to the society of recent converts with whom Augustin had associated himself.

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[1] Psalm li.

[2] Matt. ii. 28.

[3] Deut. xxxii. 49.

While this party were thus exercising themselves in pious conference at the house of Verecundus, they received an unexpected visit from Pontitianus, lately arrived from the African coast, having received baptism as a Christian convert, who entertained them with an account of Anthony, the celebrated monk of Egypt, and brought before them many particulars concerning the numerous monasteries which had grown under his encouragement and example. By these communications they were greatly surprised and captivated; for it seems they had known nothing of these institutions before, although without the walls of the city of Milan there was at the same time a monastery, under the patronage of Ambrose. The story of St. Anthony, thus related by Pontitianus, is confessed by Augustin to have been greatly instrumental in determining him upon the change of his studies and employments. Chapter viii. of book VIII. of his 'Confessions' exhibits him in the happy crisis in which all his thoughts and affections are turned into the current of pure Christianity, and entirely pledged and surrendered to its saving and immortal truths:— "There was a garden," says Augustin, "belonging to our lodging, which we had the liberty of using when it pleased us, for the master of the house, our host, lived not there. Thither the tempest within my bosom now hurried me, and thither Alipius followed me. We sat down as far from the house as was possible."

In this conference Augustin describes, in earnest and glowing language, the conflict maintained in his bosom between his contending wills; the one disposing him to the self-denials and humbling truths of the dispensation of Gospel grace, and the other continuing to be bent by the force of habit towards objects which yet had too much power in dividing his affections.

"The trifles of trifles, the vanities of vanities (those ancient favourites), were still withholding me. They shook me by this fleshly garment, and spake softly in my ear, '*Canst thou part with us? and shall we no more accompany thee from this time forth for ever?*'" Alipius was sitting beside him, perceiving the struggle within him, and expecting the issue. He thus proceeds: "I rose from Alipius; for I conceived that solitariness was more fit for a state of weeping. I removed so far from him that his presence might not interrupt me. . . . I flung myself down under a certain fig tree, giving full freedom to my tears, whereupon the floods of my eyes gushed out, an acceptable sacrifice unto Thee; and to this effect I spoke: 'And Thou, O Lord, how long? how long wilt Thou be angry? for ever? Be not mindful of my former iniquities;' for I felt myself to be still enthralled by them. Yea, I sent forth these miserable exclamations: 'How long? how long? Still to-morrow, and to-morrow? Why not now? Wherefore, even this very hour, is there not an end put to my uncleanness?' Thus much I uttered, weeping in the bitter contrition of my heart, when I heard a voice from a neighbouring house, as it had been of a boy or a girl, I know not which, in a singing tone saying, and often repeating, 'Take up and read! Take up and read!' I began to bethink myself whether children were wont, in any kind of play, to sing any such words, nor could remember ever to have heard the like. Thereupon I gat me up, and went hastily to the place where Alipius was sitting; for there had I laid the book of St. Paul's Epistles. I snatched it up and opened it, and in silence read that chapter which I first cast my eyes upon: '*Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying; but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.*' No farther would I read; nor needed I; for instantly with the end of this sentence, by a light, as it were, of security, darting into the heart, all the darkness of doubting vanished away. Shutting up the book, and putting my fingers between, with a quieted countenance, I discovered all this to Alipius."

After this incident, and an interesting interchange of sentiments with his friend, they left the garden together and went into the house, where all that had happened was communicated to the mother of Augustin, whose joy was proportioned to the magnitude of an event, in which the complete conversion of her son to the Christian Catholic faith was considered, by herself and others, as effectually accomplished. His occupation as a teacher of rhetoric was now relinquished, and some time was spent in communion with his believing and devoted friend Nebridius, to whose amiable qualities he bears a pleasing testimony, with Verecundus, at whose place of residence the decisive change in the mind of Augustin had taken place, and with Alipius, the faithful partner of his happy conversion. Disengaged from all secular cares, Augustin, and his friend Alipius, sojourned together in the same country house, as catechumens in preparation for the rite of baptism. Monica, the mother of Augustin, was their inseparable companion; "in woman's habit truly," says her pious son, "but with a masculine faith: void of worldly care, as a woman in her years should be, yet employed in matronly charity and Christian piety." When the time for being baptized drew near, Augustin, with his friend Alipius, and his natural son, of whose excellent endowments and Christian graces he speaks with delight, and in whom, he says, with a deep spirit of humility, he had no part but the sin, left their pleasant abode in the country for the city of Milan, where Ambrose performed the holy initiative rite, whereby three believing souls, separated from the world, were given to Christ, and placed under the banner of His love.

About a year after this event an Arian persecution was begun at Rome, by the influence and persuasions of Justina, the mother of the Emperor Valentinian, by which the fortitude of Ambrose, as the head and leader of the Catholic party, was principally exercised. It was upon this occasion that the bones of Gervasius and Protasius, the martyrs discovered by a vision to Ambrose, were made available to the consecration of his church. In the account hereinbefore given of that Father, these relics, and their miraculous properties, have been introduced to the reader: I need not renew the story further than to say that it seemed to have the full assent of Augustin. With trusting confidence he observes that not only they who were vexed with unclean spirits were cured, but that one who had been blind many years (a well known inhabitant of the city) having touched the repository of the relics with his handkerchief, and applied it to his eyes, was forthwith restored to his sight.

A visit was now paid him at Milan by Euodius, his fellow citizen, who had not long before him been converted to the faith, and baptized. The company of this young man was so agreeable to him, and they became so joined in heart and purpose, that Augustin was desirous of accompanying him back to Africa, with full purpose to devote himself to a life of solitude, in which resolution he was confirmed by the acquiescence of his mother, Monica, who declared her readiness to return with him and his friend. At this stage of his 'Confessions' Augustin pauses to take a short retrospect of his mother's life, in which his filial affection induced him to set before his readers some particulars which, if to some they might come recommended by their simplicity, to others they might seem unworthy to be recorded. Early intimations of future eminence may lead to the subsequent disclosures of character, as the dawn to the maturity of the day; but the petty delinquencies of childhood are only the ordinary signs of our fallen nature and common corruption.

There is a simple and touching tenderness in the picture he gives us of his mother, which places his own character in a very amiable light. Her erring husband put her value as a wife to the severest test. He was a man, as it appears, of a kind, but choleric disposition; and withal a violator of his nuptial bonds. All this provoked neither quarrel nor reproach on her part, but, to borrow the words of her devoted son, she preached Christ unto him by her conversation. When he lost his temper, which appears to have been a frequent case, she patiently endured the storm, waiting the return of reason and moderation as the time for rendering him an account of her actions. She had a school in her breast, says Augustin; and, finally, regulating her life and manners by the discipline of that school, she gained her husband to his God, to himself, and to his duty. Towards the end of his life Patricius was converted and baptized, having ceased to be the cause of uneasiness to his wife, and was brought, it may be hopefully presumed, within the happy influence of her Christian example.

After passing about four months at Rome, where he wrote his two books on the manners of the Church and of the Manichees, he proceeded with his mother to the port of Ostia, there to embark for Africa. During their stay there, on a certain day, they leant together on a window which looked into the garden of the house, and enjoyed a sweet and private colloquy, "forgetting those things which were behind, and reaching forward to the things which were before."[1] Here, indulging in those rapturous elevations of thought, which were doubled by harmonious interchange, they were raised above all earthly things, and enjoyed the foretaste of seraphic joy.[2] In a few days after this little incident, Monica fell ill of a fever, and, in one of its paroxysms, she sunk into a swoon, from which, being again brought to her senses, she looked wistfully upon Augustin and his brother standing by her, saying, "Here shall you bury your mother;" and, on its being intimated to her that it were better her remains should rest in her own country, she seemed displeased at the suggestion, and desired they would bury her body anywhere; which they remarked with some surprise, as she had always been anxious about the place of her interment, having a strong wish to be laid by the body of her husband. This conceit, as Augustin thankfully observes, had now entirely left her; and when some one of her friends inquired whether she was not afraid to have her body left at such a distance from her native country, she replied, "Nothing is far from God, nor is it to be feared that He will not know, at the end of the world, the place from which He is to raise me up." On the ninth day of her sickness, the fifty-sixth year of her age, the thirty-third of Augustin, that religious and holy soul, says her pious son, was discharged from the prison of the body.

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[1] Phil. iii. 13.

[2] [The conversation ended, on the part of Monica, with the following emphatic words: "On one ground only did I desire to stay a little in the present life, that I might see thee an enlightened Christian before my death. My God has granted to me this in the most ample measure, so that I see thee now His servant, even holding in contempt all earthly happiness. What do I here then?"—Ed.]

Augustin's sorrow for his departed mother was of long duration. His assurance of her constant growth in grace under the quickening influences of the Spirit filled him with cheerful views of her eternal welfare, and yet, as it seemed, some awful apprehensions disturbed his confidence, and placed him often upon his knees in prayer for her soul, betokening some infirmity in his creed, which may possibly have been corrected by subsequent reflection.[1]

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[1] It must be confessed that many of the Fathers of the early Church were in the practice of offering prayers for the dead, this being supposed to be for the good of their souls; but without any notion of a purgatory, as held by the Roman Church, which existed only as a mere floating superstition, without body or consistency, till the end of the sixth century, when it assumed something of the form in which it now appears among the dogmas of the Church of Rome. To Gregory I. is generally ascribed the honour of inventing the purgatorial expiation for venial transgressions. The doctrine, during the long night of the middle ages, passed through all the distortions by which a distempered credulity could vary its aspect. Whether this posthumous expiation was to be the work of fire or water, vapour or steam, were questions for the entertainment of free conjecture and private opinion. No positive system or theory on the subject could be considered as settled till the Council of Trent pronounced it an article of faith, having the warrant of infallibility and the penalty of a curse to enforce its acceptance.

As the ancient liturgies, composed by the most venerable Fathers of the primitive Church, contained prayers for the souls of prophets, apostles, martyrs, confessors, preachers, and evangelists, Augustin, having buried his mother, proceeded on his voyage to Carthage, at which place he arrived in safety A.D. 388. For a short time he continued at Carthage; but, wishing for a season of retirement and meditation, he went first to Tagaste, his native place, and, to be at more perfect liberty to devote himself to study and prayer, he retreated to a country house, which was his own property, where he resided about three years, sequestered entirely from the interruptions of worldly concerns. He lost his son Adeodatus in the year 391, while he was living in

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and even for the Blessed Virgin Mary, they could not have had for their object the deliverance from purgatory, or the abridgment of its expiatory pains. Ambrose prayed for the Emperors Valentinian, Gratian, and Theodosius; Gregory Nazianzen for his brother Cæsarius. Eusebius informs us of the prayers offered for the soul of Constantine; and we cannot suppose that in these instances there was any reference to the pains of purgatory. The Fathers had not only no warrant for the practice in the Holy Scriptures, but they never pretended any such warrant. It was a dangerous custom, leading to superstition and will-worship, and very gravely and properly rebuked in the homily of our Church on the subject: "Let these and such other considerations be sufficient to take away the gross error of purgatory out of our heads; neither let us dream any more that the souls of the dead are anything at all holpen by our prayers; but, as the Scripture teaches us, let us think that the soul of man, passing out of the body, goeth straightways either to heaven or else to hell: where the one needeth no prayer, the other is without redemption. The only purgatory wherein we must trust to be saved is the death and blood of Christ; which, if we apprehend with a true and steadfast faith, it purgeth and cleanseth us from all our sins, even as well as if He were now hanging upon the cross . . . . . . This is that purgatory wherein all Christian men put their whole trust and confidence, nothing doubting but, if they truly repent them of their sins and die in perfect faith, that then they shall forthwith pass from death to life. If this kind of purgation will not serve them, let them never hope to be released by other men's prayers, though they should continue therein until the world's end. He that cannot be saved by faith in Christ's blood, how shall he look to be delivered by man's intercessions? Hath God more respect to man on earth than He hath to Christ in heaven? "If any man sin," saith St. John, "we have an advocate with the Father, even Jesus Christ the righteous, and He is the propitiation for our sins." (1 John ii.) But we must take heed that we call upon this Advocate while we have space given us in this life, lest, when we are once dead, there be no hope of salvation left unto us. For as every man sleepeth with his own cause, so every man shall rise again with his own cause. And look, in whatsoever state he dieth, in the same state he shall also be judged, whether it be to salvation or damnation.

"Let us not, therefore, dream either of purgatory, or of prayer for the souls of them that be dead; but let us earnestly and diligently pray for them which are expressly commanded in Holy Scripture, namely, for kings and rulers, for ministers of God's Holy Word and Sacraments, for the saints of this world, otherwise called the faithful: to be short, for all men living, be they never so great enemies to God and His people, as Jews, Turks, Pagans, Infidels, and Heretics. Then shall we truly fulfil the commandment of God in that behalf, and plainly declare ourselves to be the true children of our Heavenly Father, Who suffereth the sun to shine upon the good and bad, and the rain to fall upon the just and unjust."—(Third part of the Homily concerning Prayer.)

this solitude. And in the same year, at the request of a person of eminence and virtue residing at Carthage, who, being of unsettled opinions, was desirous of profiting by his converse and instruction, he was induced to repair to that city. Hither the reputation of his great learning and piety went before him, and prepared the way for his elevation to situations of dignity and influence. Having been ordained to the sacred ministry, he was soon promoted to the office of presbyter under Valerius, the Bishop of Hippo, who, being in declining years, and incapable, from his little acquaintance with the Latin language, of preaching with profit to the people, was glad to employ in that duty the abilities of a man, the fame of whose eloquence, piety, and zeal had now begun to be sounded through the Christian universe. Various were his writings, his discourses, and his disputations while he held the office of presbyter under Valerius, who at length, after obtaining the consent of the Bishop of Carthage, as the Primate of Africa, associated him with himself in the see with the title of bishop; an irregular appointment, but confirmed by the suffrages of the clergy and people of the diocese, as well as by the bishops of the whole province.

This promotion of Augustin took place in the year of our Lord 395, and for a period of thirty-five years from that date the life of this great bishop was a continuous labour in the defence of truth, the exposition of doctrine, and the confutation of heresies; Arians, Donatists, Pelagians, and Manicheans suffering defeat in their turns under his indefatigable pen.

The following may serve for a brief exposition of the rise and progress of the Donatists.

This sect had its origin in the contest for the vacant chair of the bishopric of Carthage. Mensurius, the bishop of that see, died in the year 311, and the greater part of the clergy and the people elected Cæcilian, the archdeacon, in his place; but the Numidian bishops, not having been called in to take part in the appointment or consecration, were greatly offended. Cæcilian was summoned to appear before them, and refused to acknowledge their authority. Greatly incensed at this contumacy, the bishops of Numidia, with the concurrence of a considerable party in Carthage itself, proceeded to pronounce Cæcilian unduly appointed, and declared Majorinus, his deacon, the Bishop of Carthage. The partisans of the rival bishops divided the Carthaginian Church into two factions, adhering respectively to Cæcilian and Majorinus, which soon spread their effects in the most malignant forms of discord and mutual hostility through the whole of Christian Africa. The character of Cæcilian was loaded with opprobrious charges, and none among the Numidian bishops, who were the great promoters of the quarrel, was so distinguished by the vehemence of his invectives as Donatus, from whom the party on the side opposed to Cæcilian received the name of Donatists.

At length most of the African cities were divided between the supporters of Cæcilian and Majorinus. The controversy raged with such fury that in 313 it was brought before the tribunal of the Emperor Constantine, on which Cæcilian was acquitted of the charges brought against him; but the dissatisfied Donatists considered the decision as grossly partial and unjust. In the year following the dispute was brought before a much larger tribunal at Arles, which was attended by bishops from all the provinces of Italy, Gaul, Spain, and Germany. Still the Donatists lost their cause, and, appealing to the Emperor himself, met with a similar discomfiture.

Exasperated by these successive defeats, the Donatists were unsparing in their attacks upon their opponents, from which the Emperor himself was not exempted. In the year 316 the Emperor, inflamed by this opposition, ordered the bishops appointed by the Donatists to be banished, and some of their number were punished capitally for their rebellious obstinacy and invectives. This severe treatment had not the desired effect. Their contentious spirit was more excited by punishment, and the whole of Africa was thrown into the utmost disorder by their determined spirit and defiance of the imperial mandates. The Circumcelliones,[1] a set of sanguinary enthusiasts, spreading themselves over the country, having no fixed residences, and assuming the character of combatants against the devil, acted as the champions of the Donatists, and spread dismay and slaughter around them. Such was the terror inspired by their numbers and audacity, that Constantine, influenced by his alarms and by the suggestions of his African prefects, repealed the laws against the Donatists, who exceeded numerically the Catholics themselves. One of their councils exhibited an array of two hundred and seventy bishops.

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[1] It has been considered that the Circumcelliones took their name from the (cellæ) cottages of the peasants, round which these violent and lawless people were collected into bodies, having no fixed residence. They called themselves Agonistici, or combatants, giving out that they were combating with Satan.

At length the Donatists were overcome in a battle with the troops of the Emperor Constantius in 348, and the majority fled, while others were sent into banishment or subjected to very severe punishments. They found some favour in the eyes of the Emperor Julian, and were permitted to return and assume their ascendency in 362, from which time they increased in power and presumption till 387, when Gratian commanded all their temples to be taken from them, and all their assemblies to be broken up. But such was the vitality of this determined sect, with the military aid of the Circumcelliones, that towards the conclusion of the fourth century they were represented by no less than four hundred bishops in council. Their community, however, at this period began to be weakened by schisms, and their great and powerful opponent, the subject of our present meditation, encountered them with all the vigour of his pen and the weight of his character. We are constrained to confess that, in his controversy with the Donatists, Augustin tarnished his Christian reputation and forfeited something of his character for moderation in the maintenance of his Catholic opinions. In his letters to Vincentius and to Boniface—the forty-eighth and fiftieth in the collection—he makes very subtle but unsatisfactory excuses for the change of his opinions on the subject of the interference of the magistrate to coerce and punish heretical doctrines. In the case of Donatus and his followers, he is not ashamed to justify the intervention of the civil authority to compel all separatists from the Catholic Church to return to her jurisdiction and discipline. The letters above referred to are curious specimens of sophistical disputation, and savour strongly of the habits which Augustin had brought with him from his rhetorical schools and forensic associations. In the notable epistle to Boniface, to give, as he seems to think, a decisive force to his arguments, he does not scruple to adduce the conversion of St. Paul as a proof of the sanatory effects of force in producing sincere conviction.[1] That a man so amiable, so reasonable, and so humble in his general carriage and intercourse, should, on a subject so conspicuously belonging to the province of Divine teaching, and calling so peculiarly for the exercise of Christian charity, entertain an opinion so opposed to the obvious duties of love and forbearance, is a most striking and affecting instance of the pernicious results of setting the Church above the Gospel, and allowing human authority to lord it over God's heritage.

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[1] "Quis enim non potest amplius amare quam Christus; qui animam suam posuit pro ovibus suis? Et tamen cum Petrum et alios Apostolos solo verbo vocasset, Paulum prius Saulum ecclesiæ suæ postea magnum ædificatorem, sed horrendum

That the Donatists were sound in doctrine their adversaries have not denied, and, unless we consider the Circumcelliones as incorporated with them, there seems to be no particular ground for censuring their moral conduct. Their offence lay in their contempt for the authority of the African Church, and their denial of the privileges of the Holy Spirit to all churches except their own. But in the beginning of his letter to Boniface, Augustin, in explaining to that general the state of the controversy, thus distinguishes the Donatists from the Arians. The error of the Arians consists "in their ascribing divers substances to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost: the Donatists confess the one substance of the Trinity, although there are some among them who say that the Son is less than the Father, while they deny not that He is of the same substance; but the greater part declare that they hold the same doctrine as the Catholic Church concerning the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." It too distinctly appears that it was the deliberate opinion of this Father that the Donatists were to be brought back to the communion of the Church by compulsive measures;[1] and for this he thinks that we have a sufficient warrant in the various instances recorded in

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antea vastatorem, non sola voce compescuit, verum etiam potestate prostravit; atque infidelitatis tenebris sævientem, ad desiderandum lumen cordis ut surgeret, prius corporis cæcitate percussit. Si pœna illa non esset non ab ea postmodum sanaretur. Et quando apertis oculis nihil videbat, si eos salvos haberet, non ad impositionem manus Ananiæ, ut eorum aperiretur obtutus, tamquam squamas, quibus clausus fuerat, inde cecidisse, Scriptura narraret. Ubi est quod isti clamare consueverunt, liberum est credere, vel non credere? Ecce habent Paulum Apostolum; agnoscant in eo prius cogentem Christum et postea docentem: prius ferientem, et postea consolantem. Mirum est autem quomodo ille qui pœna corporis ad evangelium coactus intravit, plus illis omnibus qui solo verbo vocati sunt in evangelio laboravit. Et quem major amor compulit ad charitatem ejus perfecta charitas foras misit timorem. Cur ergo non cogeret ecclesia perditos filios ut redirent, si perditi filii coegerunt alios ut perirent?"—'Epist. ad Bonif.' 50.

[1] In the second book of his 'Retractations' he retracts what he had before said on this subject. "Sunt duo libri mei, quorum titulus est 'Contra partem Donati,' in quorum primo libro dixi, non mihi placere ullius sæcularis potestatis impetu schismaticos ad communionem violenter arctari; et vere tunc mihi non placebat, quia nondum expertus eram, vel quantum mali, eorum auderet impunitas, vel quantum eis in melius mutandis conferre posset diligentia disciplinæ."—Cap. 5.

Scripture of Divine chastisements for the sins of disobedience, when inflicted to reclaim the offender. "An non pertinet (he says), ad diligentiam pastoralem, etiam illas oves quæ non violenter ereptæ, sed blande leniterque seductæ a grege aberraverint, et ab alienis cæperint possideri, inventas ad ovile dominicum, si resistere voluerint, flagellorum terroribus, vel etiam doloribus revocare."

Towards the termination of the fourth and the beginning of the fifth century, the Donatists, who by their persevering energy had acquired, in the face of much rebuke from the Church, a formidable ascendency throughout Christian Africa, were brought into direct collision with imperial power. The theory of coercion, so colourably maintained by Augustin in his elaborate epistles to Vincentius and Boniface, was practised, principally at the instigation of that zealous Father, against the whole body of recusants. The Emperor began by imposing a fine upon all of that sect who should refuse to return to the Catholic Church, and ordered into banishment all their bishops and clergy who should stand in the way of the imperial edict. When these measures were found to fail of success, severer methods were enforced; and the Bishop of Hippo, in every effort to scatter and subvert the Donatists, was always ready to lend his whole weight and concurrence.

The Council of Carthage, which was held in 404, sent to the Emperor Honorius for his aid in accomplishing this end, and, as far as regarded the Circumcelliones, there seemed to be a justifiable ground for using physical force for the purpose.[1] To secure the execution of these laws, the Fathers of the Council of Carthage, held in 407, were made by the Emperor, at their own request, the special functionaries to carry them into effect. But in the succeeding year the obnoxious sect rose into some favour with Honorius, and, before the expiration of the year 409, there issued a decree from that Emperor which put a temporary stop to compulsory proceedings in matters of religion. This liberal law was, however, withdrawn at the instance of the Council of Carthage, held in the year 410, and the Emperor's secretary

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[1] The severer laws against the Donatists were usually called Edicts of Uniformity. They are mentioned in the 'Codex Theodos.,' lib. II. 'De Religione;' and in the 'Decree of the Council of Carthage,' 407. In 'Cod. Eccl. African.,' and by Du Pin, 220.

Marcellinus was sent in the following year into Africa, with full power to terminate the protracted contest by a full investigation and final decision.

The examination occupied some days of inquiry, and resulted in a sentence in favour of Augustin and the Catholics.[1] Before this court there was a very numerous attendance of bishops on either side—two hundred and eighty-six Catholics and two hundred and seventy-nine Donatists. An appeal was in vain resorted to by the defeated party, and the Donatists, though in after periods they were in strength sufficient to give much disturbance, seemed to have irrecoverably lost their credit. The Vandals, under Genseric, showed them considerable countenance, but were not able to revive their lost reputation. The Circumcelliones had no longer any compact or aggregate power. They were compelled to fly before the imperial forces; but, in the exercise of a vagrant hostility, were still able to spread consternation and slaughter throughout the province. With fluctuating success the Donatists lingered long in the North of Africa, and sometimes extended a revived influence into some parts of Europe. The reign of the Vandals was favourable to their continuance, though this was an alliance not creditable to the reputation of their doctrines, and was shared with other condemned opinions of more general prevalence. The Donatist cause maintained itself, however, through the whole of the sixth century, till the vigorous opposition of Gregory the First, commonly styled Gregory the Great, was at length successful in repressing it altogether. The sect and heresy seem to have expired under his edicts, aided by the penal laws enacted against them by the Emperor Mauricius in 595; after which time they cease to have any marked existence in ecclesiastical history.

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[1] By this law all Donatists, without distinction, if they refused to unite with the orthodox, were fined in proportion to their substance. All the goods of those who continued contumacious were forfeited; and those who concealed or harboured them were subjected to similar punishment. The bishops and clergy were banished to various places out of the province, and all their churches were transferred to their opponents.

It is worthy of remark that this court of Marcellinus was a secular court, and that the trial was a legal proceeding; and no ecclesiastical authority was then regarded as invested with the capacity of definitively deciding the conflicting claims of the Church. The reader may consult 'Augustini Breviculum Collationum cum Donat. Opp.,' tom. IX. p. 371, *et seq.*; Harduin, 'Coll. Concil.,' tom. I. p. 1043, *et seq.* The writings of Augustin against the Donatists fill the entire ninth volume of his works, and it cannot be denied that they have helped to furnish religious persecution with a name and authority which may have had some tendency to diminish its odium.

The powers of Augustin's mind were kept in full exercise, from his promotion to the see of Hippo to the end of his existence, by his contests with the Donatists. The weapons of controversy were never out of his hands. The Manicheans had received from him, while only a presbyter of Hippo, a great defeat in the person of Fortunatus, a presbyter of the Manichean sect, celebrated for his eloquence and learning, who, after his discomfiture, had left the city with shame.

The conflicts of Augustin with the Arians and the Donatists were no hindrance to his exertions in the defence of orthodoxy against the other predominant errors of his time. The efforts of Pelagius and Cælestius, which began now greatly to disturb the Church, kept the powers of his indefatigable mind in unceasing exertion.

Of the Pelagian heresy it would be difficult to enumerate all the various branches of controversy to which it gave birth. It may suffice to mention some two or three of the leading dogmas of an apostasy which involved the denial of the very ground and origin of Christianity itself. Pelagius was a monk of Britain, said to have been born in Wales, having originally the name of Marigena, which was corrupted into Morgan, and translated into Pelagius. In the year 400 he appears to have settled at Rome, and, in about five years afterwards, to have begun to inculcate his heretical opinions concerning original sin and the doctrine of free grace.[1] These opinions were embraced by Cælestius, then a student at Rome, who accompanied him to Africa in 411. There Cælestius remained for a few years at Carthage, but Pelagius proceeded to Egypt to communicate with the monks of that country. The history of these men is of no other importance than as it involves the fate of their heretical dogmas.

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[1] The doctrines of Pelagius were for some years possessed of a fluctuating influence upon the Churches. John, Bishop of Jerusalem, and even, in some measure, the Roman pontiffs, Innocent, and his successor Zosimus, afforded to them at first a sort of protection; and it was pronounced orthodox at a synod held at Diospolis, in Palestine, A.D. 416. Zosimus was at first disposed to favour Cælestius, and even received him into the communion of the Church. This was in the year 417. But a council held in 418 at Carthage made application to the Emperor Honorius to obtain the sanction of his imperial decrees for the condemnation of this heresy; and at length Zosimus joined in the sentence of the African bishops, which had also the earnest support of Jerom and Augustin. Still, however, Pelagianism maintained a considerable footing in the Churches. Eighteen bishops refused to subscribe the condemnation of Pelagius; and even in Africa it was upheld by the voices of many of the clergy.

They were both, after some fluctuations in their credit and reception, denounced by successive councils in all parts of the Christian world. Pelagius was condemned by the Councils of Carthage, Milevi, and Antioch, as well as by the Popes Innocent and Zosimus, and afterwards banished from Rome, together with his followers and avowed adherents, by the Emperor Honorius. His doctrines were far diffused, and long survived his banishment from Rome and condemnation at Antioch; but nothing seems to be recorded of him personally after that last event. Cælestius, after being banished from the empire, and pronounced a heretic by several councils, ceased likewise to be known to history.

Of Pelagius and his adherents, the leading opinions appear to have been the following.

Adam was created a mortal man, and would have died though he had not sinned; and men as they now come into the world, are, as to their powers and capacities, in the same state in which Adam was created. Whereas Augustin taught that death, temporal and eternal, with all the diseases of the body, are only the consequences and penalty of sin. According to Pelagius, the sin of Adam was the occasion of injury to mankind, not by propagation and transmission, but by the moral influence of example; death, as well as diseases, the pains of childbirth, and all outward evils, are inseparable from our nature, and not attributable to the first transgression; there was, therefore, no need of baptism to save infants from eternal death: while, according to Augustin and his followers, as the consequence of original sin, infants became obnoxious to eternal punishment; for the prevention of which consequence they had need to be baptized.[1] That the inveteracy of the sinful taint was insufficiently set forth in the doctrines of Pelagius, Scripture and experience declare and testify; while the argument of his extreme opposers lay perhaps too near the hypothesis of a mere physical and material propagation. Perhaps the conflicts of Augustin with the Pelagians threw him into some extreme opinions or statements, to which his sanguine temperament rendered him too propense.

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[1] In his famous letter to Marcellinus will be found his opinions on this subject fully set forth. After quoting the following texts, "Nisi quis renatus fuerit ex aqua et Spiritu non potest intrare in regnum Dei" — "Nisi manducaverint homines carnem ejus, (hoc est, participes facti fuerint corporis ejus,) non habebunt vitam," he draws his inferences from them thus—"His, atque hujusmodi aliis quæ nunc prætereo testimoniis, divina luce clarissimis, divina auctoritate certissimis, nonne veritas sine ulla ambiguitate proclamat non solum in regnum Dei non baptizatos parvulos intrare non posse, sed nec vitam æternam posse habere præter Christi corpus, cui ut incorporentur sacramento baptismatis imbuuntur?"—Ep. ccxxii. In chapter xv. of his 'Retractations' he relates that he had put a question to Jerom, "de origine animæ hominis." To which question Jerom gave no solution, but declared himself to have no leisure to frame an answer. But Augustin would not publish that book of his in which this subject was treated of during Jerom's life, hoping that he might be able to record Jerom's opinion. But Jerom being dead, he issued his book, that, as he declares, the reader might be admonished "non quærere omnino an detur anima nascen-

But on these subjects both Pelagius and Augustin have occasionally stated their opinions with qualifications which, if properly attended to, would show that the great ground of difference in this matter between Augustin and Pelagius was this—that the one adopted as his creed the express authority of Scripture, and that alone; the other mixed the hypotheses of his reason with the dictates of Scripture, and placed the law and the testimony in subservience to them. The denial of all hereditary sin was the direct and immediate consequence of this presumptuous dogma. That Adam was in a certain sense the author of sin, Pelagius appears not to have denied; but the propagation of sin by generation was the doctrine against which, putting Revelation aside, he reasoned, with the force of moral prejudice and practical impressions of justice in his favour.

Nothing in the Pelagian system was more earnestly opposed by Augustin than its theory of grace and free will. Pelagius contended that, as man had ability to discern good from evil, so

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tibus, aut certe de re obscurissima eam solutionem quæstionis hujus admittere quæ contraria non sit apertissimis rebus, quas de originali peccato fides Catholica novit in parvulis nisi regenerentur in Christo *sine dubitatione damnandis.* And see Aug. lib. I., 'De Peccat. Mor. et Remiss.' In the seventh 'Bampton Lecture' of Dr. Hampden we find the following remarks (see p. 327):—"The doctrine of baptism was what naturally attracted the attention of the Church in the early ages. Its connection with the doctrine of original sin brought it into prominent notice during the Pelagian controversies. And, before the rise of these controversies, we see the *extravagant* opinion entertained of its sacramental power, in the practice of delaying the reception of it until the approach of death; so that the *indispensable necessity* of baptism had been established before the period of Scholasticism. Both Pelagius and Cælestius maintained the *necessity* of baptism. The orthodox differed from them in asserting that, *without* baptism *none could be saved.* It was allowed, indeed, by the schoolmen that the *wish* (*votum*) to receive baptism might avail in the case of impediment to the actual reception of it: as also in regard to the Eucharist. The blood of martyrdom was supposed to flow with regenerating efficacy: for thus had the Holy Innocents been baptized in blood: the sword of the murderer consecrating them to the Saviour, for whom they unconsciously suffered. But as no wish or vow of receiving the rite could have been conceived by the infant, it was impossible that, dying unbaptized—(humanity may shrink at the recital of such a tenet)—it could escape the punishment due to original sin."

had he likewise power to will and to work what is good; and that his will was essentially and operatively his own. Of grace he had confused apprehensions. It was sometimes used by him for the propounding of the law, sometimes for the manifestation of the truth, sometimes for the influence of Christ's example, and sometimes for the help of the Holy Spirit; but of preventing grace, the grace of illumination, of unction, of utterance, of supplication, of godliness, of perseverance, and of joy and comfort in believing, the notions of Pelagius and his followers came exceedingly short. And, indeed, the possibility of performing good works by our own natural powers, and the practicability of perfect obedience by the right use of our wills, depreciated, if it did not disown, the distinct office of the Holy Ghost.

The opinions of Augustin on this great and important topic, are so well expressed in his letter to Valentinus, that the reader will not be sorry to have it set before him.[1]

*To Valentinus, my much loved and honoured Lord, and Brother in the Lord.*

"We have been visited by two young men, Cresconius and Felix, belonging, as they say, to your congregation; who reported to us that your monastery was agitated by a disagreement in opinion which provoked much discussion; some entertaining such exalted views of grace as wholly to deny to man the possession of free will; and, what is of worse consequence, maintaining that, in the day of judgment, God will not render to everyone according to his works. But they said that most of you held another opinion, maintaining that free will is assisted by the grace of God, and thereby disposed to what is right in thought and act; and that when the Lord shall come to render to everyone according to his works, He will pronounce those works only to be good, which God has prepared that we should walk in them. And this I pronounce to be the right opinion...... For, in the first instance, our Lord Jesus Christ, as it is written in the Gospel of the Apostle John, did not come to judge the world, but that the world should be saved through Him; but afterwards, as writes the Apostle Paul, God shall judge the world, when He shall come, as the Church confesses in its creed—to judge the quick and the dead. If, therefore, there be no grace of God, how does He save the world; if there be no free will, how does He judge the world? Accordingly the book or epistle of mine which the persons above-mentioned brought to you I wish you to understand agreeably to this belief—that you neither deny the grace of God, nor so maintain the doctrine of free will, as separating it from the grace of God, as though without it we were able to think or do anything well pleasing to God; for this is impossible. It is for this reason that our Lord, when He speaks of the fruit of righteousness, says to His disciples, 'Without Me you can do nothing.' On which subject I would have you to understand that the letter above alluded to was written to Sixtus, a presbyter of the Church of Rome, and was intended against the new Pelagian heretics, who say that the grace of God is bestowed according to our merits; in which case he who glorieth is not to glory in the Lord, but in himself—that is, in man, not in the Lord.

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[1] Epist. xlvi.

"Let no one say that for the *merits* of his own works, or for the merits of his prayers, or for the merits of his faith, the grace of God was given to him; nor let that be believed which those heretics affirm—that the grace of God is given to us according to our deservings, which is altogether a most false assertion; not because there is nothing meritorious or good belonging to the pious, and no evil in the impious, for if it were so, how shall God judge the world?"

In another letter to Valentin,[1] concerning the same persons, he says:—

"I have read to them the book composed by the most blessed martyr Cyprian, on the prayer of our Lord, and have shown them how He taught that all things which relate to the government of our lives are to be asked for from our Father which is in heaven, lest, presuming upon our own free will and power of choice, we fall from our dependence on Divine grace. We have also clearly shown them in what manner the same most glorious martyr has instructed us to pray for our enemies who are as yet unacquainted with the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, that they may become believers; which would be an unavailing precept, unless the Church believed that the bad and faithless wills of men might be turned, by the converting grace of God, to what is good and profitable."

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[1] Epist. xlvii.

The above passages from his letters to Valentin explain the views of Augustin on the propositions, standing in apparent opposition to each other, of sovereign grace and free will. They leave the province of the understanding, and the power of choice, which it embraces, undenied and unimpaired. To know our ignorance, to feel our wants, to be sensible of our weakness, and to discern the source from which help is to be sought for, is left to the competency of the natural mind, and may be said to actuate the movements of the free agent ; but to covet the best gifts, to dread the wrath and appreciate the love of God, to know the precious value of the Saviour's Cross, to have the heart engaged in the utterance of prayer, and to seek and ask with the proper importunity, are the specific effects of grace, and the blessed Spirit's work alone. And such appear to have been the views of Augustin.

The above sentiments of Augustin are full of Scriptural sanction and discriminating moderation ; but it must be owned that he did not always set forth, with their necessary guards and qualifications, his views on this subject. The ambiguity of the terms which he sometimes used in explaining himself on this difficult subject gave occasion to persons precipitate and extreme in their interpretations to carry out his propositions, far beyond their real meaning, to a dangerous and anti-scriptural excess. "That God had predestinated the wicked, not only to suffer eternal punishment, but also to commit sin, and to incur the guilt deserving that punishment ; and, as a consequence, that the good and sinful actions of men were alike predetermined by an unavoidable necessity"—such were the notions of the persons to whom the name 'Predestinarians' was applied in its unqualified sense. At the Councils of Arles and Lyons Augustin declared his disapprobation of these excessive opinions ; and it appears, from the general spirit and effect of his writings, that his ultimate sentiments lay far on this side of the rigorous doctrines respecting the Divine decrees by which the Predestinarians were distinguished. Yet that he maintained a theory nearer to their views than any of the Fathers which preceded him, is plainly deducible from his works. The doctrine of conditional election was the limit beyond which no theory adventured before the question fell under the strong handling of the Bishop of Hippo. All the doctors of the fourth century appear to have rested in the persuasion of a conditional election, or an election grounded on the Divine foreknowledge of the good works to be done by individuals, and with this was coupled the opinion of the possible falling from grace of such as had experienced its influence. That the atonement was not made for the elect alone, but that the Saviour died for all, was likewise the conviction of the Fathers anterior to Augustin, and even Augustin's early persuasion was characterised by similar views, till his theory of grace, its persevering efficacy, and its necessity as the basis of all good works, forced on him a further recognition of the doctrine of the Divine decrees; till the election of some to everlasting life, by the inscrutable will of God predestinating them from all eternity to repentance, faith, and good works, and finally to salvation, and leaving others to perish through their sins everlastingly, became the comprehensive dogma of Augustin's creed respecting the disposition and destiny to which man and his immortal interests are made unchangeably subject.

To bring these topics to an adjustment agreeable to the dictates of human reason was not within the competency of Augustin, or, indeed, of man's understanding. In the endeavour to reduce them to system and theory, the mind is involved in the perplexities of apparent contradiction, and driven upon propositions liable to be impugned, misstated, and distorted in a thousand ways. Thus Augustin has been made, in after ages, to sustain the imputation of maintaining the doctrine of unconditional decrees in all their extent, and in all their consequences. The various branches of opinions entertained by the persons known under the designation of Semipelagians, entering into conflict with the disciples of Augustin, multiplied disputes which, for several centuries, divided and subdivided the believing world, and distracted the Church. The system of Augustin, which ascribed everything to the grace of God, and to human sufficiency nothing, has been adopted as sound doctrine in all ages, with countless varieties in shade and degree. The modified Augustinianism of the Massilians, though this has also assumed various aspects, established itself in a somewhat systematic consistency throughout Europe, and especially among the schools of the Gallic monks; but their doctrines often shared the reproach of the Pelagian and Semipelagian heresies. The writings of those times in which the tenets espoused by the Massilians are most systematically set forth are those of John Cassianus, a monk who settled a monastery at Marseilles about the time of Augustin's decease, 430. The opinions of the Massilians, or rather of the Semipelagians, promoted by the writings of Cassianus, were extended over a considerable part of both Gallic and Greek Churches; and so much in favour were these doctrines during the fifth century that Lucidus, a presbyter, having professed the pure adoption of Augustin's opinions on predestination and the Divine decrees, was brought to account by Faustus, a bishop of Gaul, before the council held at Arles, A.D. 475, where those assembled censured the presbyter for his Augustinianism, and encouraged Faustus to oppose it, which he did in his two books, 'De Libero Arbitrio.' But the tide was turned again in favour of unmodified Augustinianism in the following century. So unstable is human reasoning when it affects a wisdom beyond the powers conceded to it, and the disclosures vouchsafed to it by Him who hath said unto man, "Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding."[1]

How and by what appointment evil has become mixed with God's creation, it does not necessarily concern us to know, and know we cannot, if we would. The fact that evil exists, and the fact that free will exists, as far as we can have evidence of the existence of anything, are both apparent. That God is omniscient, and governs the world by His Providence, are truths which no well-constituted mind finds it possible to doubt. There may be difficulty in reconciling these propositions, but they are *distinctly* manifest. Whatever may be said by some on the subject, who delight in abstract views of practical things, it is most clear that all mankind think, and speak, and act, as if their wills were free, and that to think and act upon a contrary principle is impossible, without opposing the whole scheme of society, abandoning all motives to action, and disclaiming all distinctions of right and wrong. As God deals with us, so in effect we are; and nothing can be more absurd and presumptuous than to deduce any theory as to the nature and condition of man from speculations concerning the nature and attributes of God; or to begin with determining what God is as the foundation for our conclusions respecting our own capacities and relations. Free will and predestination are both maintained by Augustin, because they distinctly appear in the Bible. And if there is an apparent incongruity between them, it is not within the province or the competency of a finite understanding to adjust and accommodate them to each other. They are to be distinctly believed by us, unless they are contradictory and exclusive of each other. Their apparent incongruity signifies nothing. We may safely infer that, as they are both found in the Word of God, there is a congruity between them, though concealed from our view. Let a man be ever so firm in the belief of a controlling Providence, who foresees the issues of all our contests with evil, and yet convinced of the freedom of his own will, such two persuasions would have no tendency to produce a vacillating conduct or contradictory practice. Propositions which are contradictory cannot both be believed, for they are exclusive of each other; neither can any proposition which includes contradictory terms be believed, for such are self-destructive; they import nothing; they offer nothing to the belief: it is as if we were told of a circle whose radii are unequal.

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[1] Job xxviii. 28.

The two conditions which we have been supposing to exist are both distinctly conceivable; our difficulty is in comprehending how they can work together. The subject is only to be relieved of its embarrassment by directing our thoughts to the difference between things above, and things contrary to, reason. A thing is above reason when we do not perceive how it can be; it is contrary to reason when we *do* perceive that it cannot be. In things properly said to be above reason, the understanding decides nothing as to the object, but simply as to its own incapacity. In things contrary to reason, the intellect decides as to the object, that it cannot be. A thing that is above reason is, with respect to reason, neither true nor false; of a thing contrary to reason we assert it to be false. To be above reason is a relative, to be contrary to reason is an absolute, predicament. It may be above human reason, but not above angelical reason. It may be above the scrutiny of angels, and yet known to be true in the Divine intelligence. But a thing that is contrary to reason must stand equally opposed to all reason, Divine and human. The result of all which is this: that what is above reason may be well believed; whereas, what is contrary to it must be at once, absolutely and universally, discredited and rejected. If, therefore, the two propositions of God's foreknowledge and man's free agency are both equally to be collected from Scripture, we ought, in no case, to doubt their being respectively true. As the case really stands, to disbelieve them, because we cannot perceive how they are to be reconciled, or in what way their congruity is to be manifested, would amount to a renunciation of the infallible Word of God, being equally a revolt against positive testimony and sound philosophy; for man may be free to will and to act, though God may know what he will choose and what he will execute. What are the essential perfections of His infinite nature we cannot know, and therefore we cannot give the whole moral explanation of this difficult problem. But of how many phenomena of the natural and moral world are we constrained to remain in profound ignorance! Of this we may be sure, as has been well said, "That God cannot make one false step in the moral or natural world; that 'righteousness and judgment are the habitation of His seat,' though 'clouds and darkness are round about Him.'"[1]

In pursuing this great subject, the lines of which are so strongly traced in the theology of Augustin, we are led by his reasonings to acknowledge that in the conjunct consideration of the freedom of man's will with an universally-disposing Providence as abstract doctrines, there are great and unmanageable difficulties; while the whole constitution of the natural and moral world suggests and forces them upon us, as propositions to be separately and distinctly believed and embraced. We cannot but perceive the danger of setting up our speculations against facts, so as to entertain a conception of the one which shall imply the exclusion of the other. It is assuming the impossibility of their co-existence upon no better ground than that, if there were any media whereby they might be rendered consistent, such media must have been known to us. We are not capable of reasoning upon these propositions without putting aside the Divine communications; for, as by the light of Nature both these truths are separately sustained, so the revealed Word of God has not left either of them to be overpowered by the other, but has asserted each of them distinctly. And this was altogether to have been expected. From the natural constitution of things in the world, these truths are made separately to strike the understanding as reflected lights; but they issue with a direct radiation from the express Word of God in His Holy Scripture. There we find the Creator announcing Himself to His creatures as the Supreme Governor of the Universe, in all the plenitude of His prescience and His providence; and there also we find Him recognising the free will and free agency of man, and urging him to his duties of faith and practice, of prayer and exertion, by the strongest motives which can affect the heart and understanding of a reasonable creature.

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[1] It is by these references to our natural experience in the way of analogy that our Saviour answers the difficulties which Nicodemus confessed himself to feel in understanding the doctrine of regeneration by the Holy Spirit: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth;" and again, "If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things?" The above gracious words remind the scholar of the argument of Socrates in reasoning down the incredulity of his friend concerning a divine rule and providence: — *Εννόε. δὲ, ὅτι καὶ ὁ πᾶσι φανερὸς δοκῶν εἶναι ἥλιος οὐκ ἐπιτρέπει τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ἑαυτὸν ἀκριβῶς ὁρᾷν, ἀλλ' ἐάν τις αὐτὸν ἀναιδῶς ἐγχειρῇ θεᾶσθαι, τὴν ὄψιν ἀφαιρεῖται. Καὶ τοὺς ὑπηρέτας δὲ τῶν θεῶν εὑρήσεις ἀφανεῖς ὄντας· κεραυνός τε γὰρ ὅτι μὲν ἄνωθεν ἀφίεται δῆλον, καὶ ὅτι οἷς ἂν ἐντύχῃ πάντων κρατεῖ, ὁρᾶται δ' οὔτ' ἐπιὼν, οὔτε κατασκήψας, οὔτε ἀπιὼν· καὶ ἄνεμοι αὐτοὶ μὲν οὐχ ὁρῶνται, ἃ δὲ ποιοῦσι φανερὰ ἡμῖν ἐστι, καὶ προσιόντων αὐτῶν αἰσθανόμεθα. Ἀλλὰ μὴν καὶ ἀνθρώπου γε ψυχὴ (εἴπερ τι καὶ ἄλλο τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων,) τοῦ θείου μετέχει· ὅτι μὲν γὰρ βασιλέυει ἐν ἡμῖν φανερὸν, ὁρᾶται δὲ οὐδ' αὐτή.*—'Xen. Mem.,' lib. IV. c. iii. § 14.

To this point then we must come, and here stop. Evil exists, God foresees, and His Providence rules; and yet we must not understand God to be the author of evil, or consider His ordinances and appointments as coercing human will, or destroying the moral liberty of His rational creatures. Our short understandings are unequal to the task of making an harmonious coalition and adjustment of moral and rational liberty with the decrees of Almighty prescience and a superintending Providence, neither do we perceive them to be essentially exclusive of each other. Their respective existences are experimentally demonstrated in the natural world, and they are distinctly propounded in the written and direct revelation of God's relations to man. If either of these doctrines were absent from the Scriptures, or they were therein so stated as to contradict each other, revelation would offer no little violence to our intellectual faculties.

"On the Pelagian question," it has been said, "we seek in vain in the writings of Augustin any positive dogmatic language, by which an exact theory of Divine and human agency, in their relation to each other, may be enunciated. This is evidenced in the fact that the orthodox, the Jansenists, the Thomists, and the Jesuits or Molinists, all equally refer themselves to the authority of that Father." On the details of the doctrine of grace the vigorous mind of Augustin seemed to be somewhat embarrassed, and to have endeavoured, with too sanguine a resolution, to systematise his theories—an effort which, on such a subject, was, as a natural consequence, rather the beginning than the end of controversy. But on the great lines of dispute with the maintainers of the Pelagian tenets his opinions and arguments were consistent, perspicuous, and decisive. In opposition to the proud reliance on the strength of nature to resist temptations and the power of evil, the Bishop of Hippo placed the Christian on his knees in humble and self-renouncing prayer for the inward grace and assistance of the Divine Spirit, to draw him to the love of God, to repair the ravages of sin, and to renew the fallen nature. Thus, while many of the Fathers, contemporary with Augustin, joined with him in his zealous opposition of the Pelagian doctrine of man's sufficiency, they yet differed from him on the doctrine of an absolute and irrespective election, and the absolute impossibility of falling from a state of regenerating and justifying grace. Prosper was a distinguished follower of Augustin in France, and thus he expresses himself in his epistle to this Father: "Many of the servants of Christ in Marseilles judge your opinion, that the conversion and perseverance of the elect depend on God's absolute decree, to be contrary to the judgment of the Fathers and to the sense of the Christian Church."

Age and indefatigable labour made at length their natural inroads on the physical strength of Augustin. Having, by a succession of conflicts with all the varied forms of error, worn down and wasted a strong constitution, he felt at length, at the age of seventy, the decay which directs the eyes of a weary saint to the crowning end of his perseverance. But the mind of a man of God is often observed to soar when ordinary humanity sinks. The productions of the last years of Augustin were the most distinguished by correctness of thinking and composition. In the year 426, about four years before his death, he wrote his book of 'Retractations;' and if, by that candid and modest production, an advancement was shown in correctness of judgment, by his books concerning the Holy Trinity, and his work on the 'City of God,' the flourishing state of his capacity in the midst of his infirmities, troubles, and trials, was remarkably evinced.

To solace and strengthen him under his weight of years, he appointed one Eradius to be his assistant in his episcopal office, without the ordination or authority of a bishop, being unwilling to transgress the rule which had been departed from in his own case, forbidding the co-existence of two bishops in the same diocese. But it was decreed that his morning radiance and his setting glory should have to contend with a cloudy atmosphere. Civilised Africa was about to fall before a barbarian force, and its Christian orthodoxy, reared by the fostering hand of the Bishop of Hippo, to yield to the ascendency of the followers of Arius. With the latter days of Augustin those of the celebrated Count Boniface are painfully associated. Ætius and Boniface may be deservedly named, says Gibbon, as the last of the Romans. The fame of those generals cast a transitory lustre on the catastrophe of Roman grandeur, but their discord was the immediate cause of the loss of Africa, by rendering useless the superior virtues of the friend of Augustin. With the forces and treasures of Africa Boniface had long supported the fortunes of the Empress Placida, mother of the third Valentinian, till, by the fraud of his rival, his faithful services were brought under the suspicion of his mistress, and the faction of which Ætius was the leader became paramount in the state. The friendship which had for some time subsisted between Augustin and Boniface had been nearly dissolved by the unsteadiness of that general, who, from a high Christian profession, had fallen back into his disorderly and sensual habits, filling the heart of the bishop with disappointment and regret. The recall from his command in Africa put Boniface upon desperate counsels. After some struggles his resolution was taken. The Vandals were invited from Spain, and the boundless ambition of Genseric had a footing given to it, where it easily incorporated itself with the spirit of revenge and hatred long fomented in Africa by the conquest and suppression of the Donatists, and especially of the Circumcelliones, by the imperial arms.

Swollen by these accessions of savage malcontents, and of the fierce and roving inhabitants of the coast and the desert, the camp of Genseric filled the province of Africa with dismay; and Boniface perceived that, by giving way to his resentment, he had been preparing his own ruin. Desolation attended the career of the Vandals along the coast, and the narrow but fertile region of Roman Africa, and the tide of destruction rolled impetuously on till it reached the walls of Hippo Regius, where Augustin awaited the issue of the conflict between the Vandal force and the Roman general. Boniface, too late made sensible of his rashness, in vain exerted himself to resist the consequences of his fatal invitation. After a signal defeat he retired within the walls of Hippo Regius, where his skill and experience enabled him to protract the fate of the city for the space of fourteen months. During this anxious period, in which the inhabitants were made to suffer all the extremities of a sanguinary siege, Boniface was deprived of his Christian counsellor and friend, the great Augustin, who was saved by a timely and gentle death, of which his exhausted frame had given him a gradual warning, from the last stroke of the impending calamity. The mournful apprehension of the miseries with which Africa and the Church of Christ were now threatened, and the approaching triumph of the Arian faction, were probably the immediate causes of his dissolution; but his strength had been long declining under his general anxieties and the weight of years. If his departure was the immediate effect of the crisis in which events had placed him, yet was it peculiarly marked by self-abasement and Christian composure. He spent his last hours in solemn and particular repentance, avowing, in terms of deep and holy contrition, the trespasses of his youth. For the last ten days, says Possidius, his friend of forty years, before his leaving the body, he enjoined us who were present with him to let no one have access to him but his physicians and his necessary attendants; which injunction being strictly attended to, he gave up the whole of that time to prayer, having cheerfully and strenuously preached the Word of God until arrested by his last sickness. With a perfect soundness of mind and purpose, retaining to the last his sight and hearing, and a body undisfigured by the hand of death, while his friends stood round him and joined in his parting prayers, he gently sank into the sleep of his fathers, in the seventy-sixth year of his age, and the 430th of the Christian æra, having laboured in the ministry of the Word during forty years of unwearied exertion.

Very numerous are the products of the labour and genius of this great Father. Though the city after his death was burned by the Vandals, his writings were rescued to become sources of instruction not unmixed with error, whereby a fresh spring was given to thought and inquiry, and, on some points, a new æra of Christian doctrine introduced. The Benedictine edition of eleven volumes has spread before us these accumulated stores, the preservation of which, amidst the tumult and violence which followed the death of Augustin, may be reckoned at least among marvellous things, however justly we may suspect the legends which garnish the sepulchres of the saints. The relics of St. Augustin were deposited in Hippo, and there remained until they were carried by the African bishops to the place of their exile in Sardinia, in the year 500. About two centuries afterwards Liutprand, King of the Lombards, is supposed to have conveyed them from Sardinia to Pavia, in which place they are said to have been discovered, in 1695, by one of those lucky accidents which so often bring to light like precious remains.

The character of Augustin is best gathered from his epistles, which bear an interesting testimony to his piety and humanity. They display also very considerable powers of investigation, extensive learning, and lofty conceptions. Gibbon hastily pronounces him to be superficial, perhaps from his candid avowal in his 'Confessions' that he had read the Platonists in a Latin version. He probably was not well enough acquainted with the Greek to read without trouble the philosophy conveyed through that language; but the assumption of some critics, that he was so ignorant of Greek as to be unqualified for the task of expounding Scripture, has no warrant from his own confessions, or from the character and extent of his learned labours. It is not very probable that one who performed the office of a public teacher of rhetoric with great success and celebrity at Carthage, Rome, and Milan, should be ignorant of any branch of necessary learning, though less familiar with some than with others. That he neglected the study of Greek in his youth is his own confession; but his deep acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures implies such a direction to his studies as must have repaired the deficiencies arising from early neglect.

The historian who thus speaks of the superficial learning of Augustin, has nevertheless allowed him a strong, capacious, and argumentative mind; capable of "sounding the dark abyss of grace, predestination, free will, and original sin; and of framing and restoring a rigid system of Christianity, which has been entertained, with public applause and secret reluctance, by the Latin Church."[1] To such as are intelligent on the awful topics on which the pen of Augustin was employed, it will appear that he touched nothing with which his mind had not become deeply acquainted. Augustin was not, but Gibbon was, superficial on the subjects of immortal concern. He was so little acquainted with the learning of Augustin as to be but ill qualified to appreciate his merit. He avows his acquaintance with the writings of the Bishop of Hippo not to have extended beyond the 'Confessions' and the 'City of God'; and how far it extended beyond the porch of that sanctuary, where the great man of whom he treats dedicated his heart-offerings to his Maker, and how far beyond the entrance gate of the "City" peopled with his pious and magnificent thoughts, we are at liberty to entertain our doubts.[2]

Still, however, the cause of truth must be abandoned before we can affirm of Augustin that he was exempt from the faults which for the most part characterise the eminent Christians of the fourth and fifth centuries, especially those whose conversion was the tardy product of convictions ingrafted on the stock of their Gentile institutions. Among his faults, when the general amenity of his character is considered, we reckon, with regret and reluctance, a propensity to visit error or unbelief with persecution. The decree of the Emperor Honorius against the African Donatists, having driven those schismatics to such desperation, as to occasion instances of self-murder among them, Dulcitius, then the magistrate on whom the office fell of executing the imperial mandates, hesitated, from the fear of consequences, to put the law in execution; and, having asked advice from Augustin, was answered by the zealous prelate, that those rebels against the discipline of the Catholic Church would be best corrected and reclaimed by chastisement and compulsion; and that if any, incited by their furious passions, were threatening to burn their conventicles, and perish with their congregations in the flames, it were better that some should burn themselves here, than that all should be consigned to everlasting burnings in hell. "Melius quidam suis ignibus pereunt, quam pariter universi sempiternis ignibus gehennarum merito sacrilegæ dissentionis ardebunt."[1]

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[1] Gibbon, c. 33.

[2] Dr. Jortin, in his desultory 'Remarks on Ecclesiastical History,' cites the following passage from Cave:—"De omnigena ejus eruditione pluribus agere idem esset ac lucem soli offundere. Hospes sit oportet tum in ejus, tum in aliorum scriptis, qui nesciat Augustinum in toto meliorum literarum circulo eminere; in quæstionibus vero theologicis primas tenere." And upon this opinion the Doctor makes the remark following: "What an excessive compliment is here paid to a man who, in reality, had not a sufficient quantity of erudition and of judgment to entitle him to this character, or to anything like it."—Jortin, 'Rem. on Eccl. Hist.,' vol. III. p. 110.

Habituated to a course of vicious indulgence in the early stage of his existence, mentally and constitutionally disposed to excess, fascinated for awhile by the profane and bewildering rhapsodies and jargon of the Manichees, it is no subject of wonder that many aberrations from the sober standard of truth should characterise and discolour some of his reasonings and some of his opinions. His thoughts, like those of some other of the Fathers, were very loose and variable concerning the intermediate sojourn of the souls of the faithful, during the period between death and the final day. Dogmas of doubtful speculation occur, not unfrequently, in his works, respecting purgatorial punishment and purification; though in some places he appears to deny that any change takes place during the interval between death and the last judgment. "In quo quemque invenerit suus novissimus dies, in hoc eum comprehendet mundi novissimus dies; quoniam qualis in die isto quisque moritur, talis in die illo judicabitur."[2] Still, however, the many allusions and surmises which, in the various works of Augustin, suggest the notion of a purgatory, gave the shade of his authority to this terrific dogma, and helped to spread its influence among the Churches; though there is good reason for suspecting that this eminent man was often made to speak a sènse not his own, but that of a dishonest interpolator. In chapter xxiv. book XXI. of his 'De Civitate Dei,' we find words expressing an opinion in favour of the doctrine of purgatory, which, according to Ludovicus Vives, the editor of that work, were not found in the ancient manuscripts of Bruges and Cologne.[3]

Though Augustin is not to be reckoned among those Fathers of the Church who are most liable to the charge of maintaining fanciful interpretations of Scripture, or self-originated and licentious theories, yet he is not always under the control of a sober judgment. That angels were invested with bodies like our own, and disturbed by the carnal passions of our human nature, and that the souls of men were propagated from father to son, by the natural course of generation,[1] was also an opinion which he held in common with some of the Western Churches;—a dogma to which Jerom was strongly opposed, as in opinion both dangerous and unwarranted.[2] Although, on the subject of the Eucharist, Augustin was not above the practice of masking the truths of Revelation by the disguise of allegories and ambiguities, and expounding texts, in the presence of the Catechumens, so as to leave them in mental amazement and awe, yet it is due to him to remember that very numerous expositions of Scripture have proceeded from his pen, not more remarkable for their ingenuity and sublimity than for their natural and veritable plainness and fidelity. Neither let the value and sincerity of his self-reproving animadversions in his book of 'Retractations' be wanting to the monument which his memory claims at the hands of a grateful posterity. The prostration of his mind before the authority of the sacred record gives him a great distinction among those who are recognised as the Fathers of the Christian Church; and no genuine believer can withhold the homage due to his frequent declarations, that the opinions of the Fathers, however they may excel in sanctity or learning, "bind not our belief otherwise than so far as they are consonant to Scripture or reason; and that they ought to be examined by the one or the other, as proceeding from persons who are not infallible, and possibly may have erred."[1] The rule of interpretation to be gathered from his writings being this—that we are to examine the Fathers by the Scriptures, and not the Scriptures by the Fathers.

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[1] Epist. 61. Mosheim, Cent. IV. Part 2, c. 3.

[2] Epist. 80. Hesychio.

[3] "In antiquis libris, Brug. et Colon. non leguntur isti decem aut duodecim qui sequuntur versus."—Ludov. Viv. in lib. XXI., 'De Civ. Dei,' c. 24.

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[1] 'Aug. contr. Acad.,' c. 7. Ep. iii. 115. 'Enchir. ad. Laur.,' c. 59. 'De Divin. Dæmon.,' *a.* 3, 4, 5. 'De Civ. Dei,' lib. XV. c. 23. Et ibi Vives. Jerom thus expresses himself on this subject:—"Omne deinceps humanum genus quibus animarum censetur exordiis? utrum ex traduce, juxta bruta animalia," &c. "An rationabiles creaturæ desiderio corporum," &c.; "an certè, quod ecclesiasticum est, — quotidie Deus fabricetur animas: cujus velle fecisse est, et conditor esse non cessat."—Hier. 'Ad Pammach. adv. error Joh. Hieron.' § 22. John, Bishop of Thessalonica, affirmed that it was generally the opinion of the Church that angels are not wholly incorporeal and invisible; but have bodies, though of a very rare and thin substance, not much unlike those of the fire or the air. Λεπτοσωμάτους δὲ καὶ ἀερώδεις, ἢ πυρώδεις.—'John Thessal. in Concil.,' 7 Act.

[2] The opinion entertained on this subject by many of the Western Churches has been characterised by some as materialism, and, indeed, in its effects and consequences, it would not be considered far removed from that spurious philosophy. Dr. Hampden, in one of his notes to his third lecture, observes that materialism may be regarded as generally the doctrine of the primitive Church. He says it accorded more with the popular view of future punishments; and it reserved to God Himself more exclusively the prerogative of spirituality. He quotes the following passage from Jerom: "Jerom, alluding to the different opinions concerning the nature of the soul, speaks of its propagation in a manner analogous to the body, as the prevailing tenet of the West: "Utrum lapsa de cælo sit, ut Pythagoras philosophus, omnesque Platonici, et Origenes putant, anima; an a propria Dei substantia, ut Stoici, Manichæus, et Hispana Priscilliani hæresis, suspicantur; an in thesauro habeantur Dei olim conditæ, ut quidam ecclesiastici stulta persuasione confidunt; an quotidie a Deo fiant, et mittantur in corpora; an certe a traduce, ut Tertullianus, Apollinaris, et maxima pars Occidentalium autumant; ut quomodo corpus ex corpore, sic anima nascatur ex anima, et simili cum brutis animantibus conditione subsistat." — Hieronym. 'Marcellino et Anapsychiæ.' Ep. 126.

To show the consistency of this good man with himself, I cannot forbear transcribing, for the edification of the reader, a portion of one of his letters to Jerom, on the subject of the famous contest between them concerning the integrity of St. Paul in his correction of St. Peter. It is to the following effect:

"But I cannot allow Scripture to be so tampered with; for I confess to you, that all the sacred writings which are called canonical I have learned to regard with such reverence and honour, that none of those by whom they were composed have, according to my most firm belief, erred in anything; and if I meet with any matter in those writings, which appears to be opposed to truth, it is, I doubt not, to be imputed to a blunder of the copier, or to an error of the translator, or to my own defective understanding of the passage. With respect to other writers, however distinguished they may be by their sanctity or learning, I do not think what they say to be true, because it has their authority to support it, but so far only as it is confirmed by canonical authors, or is supported upon strong grounds of probability. Nor do I think, my brother, that on this point you entertain an opinion at variance with mine; nor can I suppose that it is your wish, that what you write should be read with the same homage as those of the Prophets and Apostles, concerning whose writings it is impious to doubt that they are free from error. Far be this from your pious humility, and the pure commerce you hold with your own spirit. . . . . Holy Scripture, raised, as it is, on the summit of high and heavenly authority, I shall always read secure and certain of its truth; and shall see in it the examples of men approved, corrected, or condemned, faithfully set forth, rather than suffer myself to cavil at the divine document, because I feel it hard to credit the account of so much that is reprehensible in persons so distinguished for their general excellence. The Manicheans, whose wicked error stands confuted by the clearest sense of Holy Scripture, because they are unable to distort its sacred meaning, are daring enough to declare most of its statements to be false; in such a way, indeed, as not directly to impute falsehood to the Apostles themselves, but to certain (who they were I know not) corrupters of the text. . . . . . Is it not obvious to your correct discernment how much countenance is administered to the above-named heretics, when we do not merely say that the Apostolic writings have been falsified, but that the Apostles themselves have written falsehoods; for you say that it is not credible that Paul should have meant to have blamed Peter for doing what he, Paul, himself had done. I am not now inquiring what he did, but what he has written. It is most material to my argument, that the verity of the Holy Scriptures, which were given us to build up our precious faith, not by ordinary testimony, but by the Apostles themselves, and on that account to be received as entitled to our entire belief, and as standing on the highest ground of authority, should in every part be raised above all doubt or dispute."

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[1] Aug. 'Ep. ad Hier.;' 'Contr. Faust.' c. 5.

The reader will not be displeased to have a further specimen of the manner in which the mind of Augustin manifests itself in the fervid style of his letters. For this purpose I produce a passage or two of one of his epistles to Paulinus of Nola.

"Delightful are the thoughts which your letters present to those who have the advantage of perusing them. Letters they are full of faith unfeigned, precious hope, and pure charity. What a thirst and craving they excite in us to go with your spirit into the house of the Lord! What can surpass that most holy love which they seem to breathe? or that ebullition of cordial feelings with which they overflow? What thanksgivings they pour forth to God! What gifts they bring down in return from Him! Shall we say that they are most distinguished by meekness, or by fervour? by light, or abundance? What is it in them that so melts us; that so inflames us; that rains so upon us, and yet from so serene a sky? What is it, I beseech you, that we can pay you as their worth, unless by being wholly yours in Him, whose, only and wholly, you are? If this is not enough, I have no more to give. You have caused me to think this is not a little to bestow, having condescended to honour me with so great commendation in your letters that when I bestow myself upon you, if I treat this present as a mean one, I must seem to doubt your veracity. Though ashamed of thinking so well of myself, I should be more ashamed to disbelieve you. I must, therefore, thus compromise the case. I will not believe that I am what you suppose, since of this I am not ascertained; but I will confidently believe I am loved by you, because this I plainly perceive and understand. Thus I shall be neither precipitate in my judgment of myself, nor ungrateful towards you. And when I offer myself entirely to you, it cannot be a small thing, because I offer that which is honoured by your attachment. I offer, if not what you think me to be, still that which you pray that I may be in desert. Your prayers *for* me, are better than your praises *of* me—better to wish and pray that much may be added to what I am, than think me to be what I am not.

"Behold, in the man who brings you this letter, my dearest friend, one with whom I have lived in the most cordial friendship from my earliest youth; whose acceptance with you will be ensured by the commendation of him who sends him to you. But I wish to caution you against giving credit to what he shall say in praise of me. For I have found him to be a man too subject to be deceived by his propensity to measure others by his affection, rather than by their true deserts; and especially to deem me to have already received those gifts, to receive which at the Lord's hands I should, indeed, open wide the entrance to my inmost bosom. And if he thus expresses himself concerning me when we are together, who does not see what praises he will be likely to pour upon my name when absent? praises more flattering than true.

"He will transcribe for your use the books I have composed; for I do not know that I have written anything for the ears either of those who are without, or those within the Church, of which he is not possessed. But when you read them, my venerable friend, let not those things which the truth speaks through my infirmity so captivate you, that those which originate with myself may be accepted by you without diligent examination;

much less let the pleasure you find in dwelling upon the good and right things imparted to me, of which I am the mere dispenser, make you forget how much I need your prayers for the numerous errors I commit. In these performances, if you find, as you needs must do, what deserves your censure, there I myself am conspicuous; but where, by that gift of discernment, which you have received of God, you find anything with which you are rightly pleased, let Him have your gratitude and praise for it who is the Fountain of life, and in whose light we shall see light when we shall see Him face to face, and not, as now, in enigma.[1] What has been the product of my brain under the influence of the old fermentation, comes under a severe self-examination; but what, by the gift of God, my mind has produced when nourished by the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth, I rejoice in with trembling. . . . . Pray for me, my brother, that these may be always my simple confessions, and that my heart may not be at variance with my tongue. . . . . Now, since you are about to peruse my many productions, your love will be rendered a source of greater pleasure to me, if what you shall find reprehensible in them you will, tempering your partiality with a due regard to justice, correct and confute. For, certainly, you are not one of those with whose oil I need fear my head to be anointed.

"The fraternity here, not only those who dwell with us, but who live in other places serving God as we do, but especially all who know us, and have fellowship with us in Christ, send their salutation and homage; while they desire earnestly to be admitted into brotherhood with you, and to witness the happiness you have in yourself and communicate to others. I dare not ask it, but if your ecclesiastical duties allow you any rest, come and see what are the sentiments which I feel towards you in common with Africa."

The grace and attractions of an amiable temper, and a disposition towards benevolence and candour, throw a great interest round the character and deportment of Augustin. He was ever ready to answer the inquiries, and solve the difficulties, of those who resorted to him for instruction.[2] A specimen of this may be seen in the letter of Volusian to Augustin, and Augustin's in reply. The same amenability to these applications and inquiries is observable in the correspondence of Jerom; but the tenacity with which he held his opinions, even on points of secondary importance, and the homage he thought to be due to his authority on questions of theological learning or criticism, his impatience of contradiction and morosity in disputation, especially in the discussions between these authoritative guides of the Church, give to the character of Augustin an eminent advantage in the comparison. No man seemed to be more replenished with the believer's hope than Augustin, or to cherish purer thoughts of salvation wrought by the blood of the atonement.

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[1] Βλέπομεν γὰρ ἄρτι δι' ἐσόπτρου ἐν αἰνίγματι.—1 Cor. xiii. 12.

[2] [Erasmus, in his preface to Augustin's 'Epistles,' very strikingly dilates on this feature of his character: "Ut satagit! ut molitur! ut se vertit in omnia, quoties affulsit aliqua spes pertrahendi vel paganum ad Christum, vel hæreticum

The name of Augustin gives great weight to the sense generally entertained by the Fathers of the Church, of the import of the words used by the Saviour in dispensing the bread and the wine to His disciples at the last Supper. After saying that "the Lord hesitated not to say 'This is My body,'" he adds, "when He delivered only the *sign* of His body."[1] In which view of the figurative sense of the words alluded to, the far greater part of the ancient Christian writers, including many even of the Roman Church, have agreed; affording ground for alleging that the dogma of transubstantiation was a departure as well from ecclesiastical as from Scriptural antiquity. The words instituting the holy ordinance of the Eucharist, which in a subsequent age have, by the joint efficacy of fraud and superstition, been forced upon the greater part of the Christian world in their literal import, to establish the most revolting and absurd of all monstrous imaginations, were, by the far greater part of the ancient Fathers, received in a metaphorical sense agreeable to common usage, and especially to the figurative modes of expression so frequent in the sacred writings.

It was not always, however, that the good sense of Augustin was as conspicuous as in the instance which has just fallen under our notice. His veneration for relics, and the ready credence with which he listened to the miraculous stories invented con-

ad ecclesiæ communionem! Ut se submittit! ut, juxta Paulum, mutat vocem suam! undequaque venans occasionem excitandæ propagandæque pietatis, ubicunque sentit aliquam bonæ mentis scintillam residere. Cui mulierculæ, cui plebeio, cui aulico, cui hæretico, non prompte, mansuete, blandeque respondet!"—ED.]

[1] Non enim Dominus dubitavit dicere, hoc est corpus meum, cum signum daret corporis sui.—August. 'Contr. Adimant.' c. 12.

cerning them, impeach, to some extent, the integrity of his judgment, and bring under some suspicion his sense of the sacredness and inviolability of truth, when the cause that lay nearest to his heart was to be served. The bones of Gervasius and Protasius, which were made so conducive to the purposes of Ambrose, had, as before remarked, the full acquiescence of Augustin; and Paulinus hardly bore stronger testimony to the marvels wrought at the tomb of St. Felix, than the Bishop of Hippo to the wonders witnessed in the chapel where the bones of St. Stephen were reposited.

To charge the author of the 'Confessions' and 'Retractations' with lending his authority, with precipitate credulity or dishonest design, to a fabricated story, whatever might be its colour or excuse, either as an artifice for confirming the faithful or confounding the infidel, would be to weaken greatly the credit and support which truth has derived from the advocacy of this able auxiliary; and yet to listen to the various tales which have come down to us about the bones of St. Stephen,[1] and which have, or appear to have, the testimonials of Augustin to challenge our assent, would be giving to these legends a character which they are far from meriting, and to superstition a triumph of which she knows too well how to profit. To escape out of this difficulty, one is induced to impute the wonderful tale told of St. Stephen's relics to the force of an imagination highly exalted by physical temperament, and to the excitement of the same zeal which had made him a partaker of the delusion of Ambrose concerning the bones of Gervasius and Protasius, not better entitled than those of St. Stephen to so grave a patronage.[2]

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[1] According to some writers, Paul Orosius, a Presbyter of Tarragona in Spain, who, in the year 413, was sent into Africa, to consult Augustin respecting the sect of the Priscillianists, and was afterwards, in the year 415, deputed by Augustin to visit Jerom, to learn his opinion concerning the origin of souls, carried with him into Africa the bones of St. Stephen. He wrote twelve books of histories to confute the Pagans; and some controversial treatises against the Pelagians and Priscillianists.

[2] Tillemont, who was at least as easy to be convinced in these matters as Augustin, has regarded the discovery of the relics of St. Stephen as a leading event of the fifth century of the Church, and a long account of it may be found in his work. He produces his vouchers, among whom occurs the name of Augustin. A phial, filled with the blood of St. Stephen was brought to Naples by one Gaudioso, an African bishop, which was wont to boil and bubble on every third of August.

This issue of blood from dry bones and other relics has always been a great support of saint worship. It has even lent great confirmation to the doctrine of transubstantiation. In a note given in page 107 of Bishop Douglas's 'Crite-

We now leave the memory of Augustin to its sanctified repose. His learning has been denied, and his sincerity doubted, on equally untenable grounds. Any deficiency of either of these properties, though it might not possibly have kept him from celebrity among his contemporaries, or from the distinction which has followed his name and his works to after ages, would have denied him that enduring influence and that weight of authority by which he rose to be the founder of a theological system, which, under various modifications, has maintained itself to the present hour, notwithstanding the superior adaptation of Pelagianism and Semipelagianism to the natural bent of the human mind. His letters characterise him as a man of amiable temper and an affectionate disposition. And if on the subject of persecution for religious opinions his sentiments were irreconcilable with the principles of toleration and justice, yet the general tenor of his conduct claims for him the most charitable construction of this exceptionable part of it. A temperament very warm and excitable, a conviction that he was acting under a Divine warrant, and a holy dread of the increasing favour which a philosophy of pagan origin was secretly acquiring in the Church, not to mention the tumultuary and sanguinary pro-

rion,' he quotes from a Romish work the story of some Jews, who, having stolen several consecrated wafers out of a Church, ran their knives into them, and forthwith there streamed out great quantities of blood. Nothing was more common among the virtuosos in relics than this phenomenon.

Lucian, a presbyter of Jerusalem, relates a dream which happened to him on three successive nights. A venerable figure of a man, with a long beard, a white robe, and a gold rod, appeared to him, declaring himself to be Gamaliel; and revealing to him that his own body, with that of his son Abibas, Nicodemus, and the proto-martyr Stephen, lay buried in a certain field near them. He added that they had made choice of Lucian to inform the Bishop of Jerusalem of the place in which their remains might be found. The bishop was made acquainted with the disclosure, and the ground was opened in the presence of a great multitude of spectators. The coffins of Gamaliel, Abibas, and Nicodemus, were found in their order, according to the statement; but when the one which contained the remains of Stephen was approached, the earth trembled, and an odour, such as Paradise might be supposed to have breathed, gratified the sense, and cured the diseases of seventy-three of the persons attending the ceremony. The bones of St. Stephen were carried to a church built to receive them on Mount Zion, and the most minute particles of the relics, especially a drop of blood, was found to possess a mysterious and heavenly virtue. Augustin relates a selection of the miracles wrought by the bones and blood of the martyr, with an unhesitating belief, in the number of which were three resurrections from the dead, in the space of two years. A phial of the martyr's blood was annually liquefied at Naples, till the blood of St. Januarius was substituted in its place.—See Augustin, 'De Civitate Dei,' lib. XXII. c. 8, and Appendix by Evodius, Bishop of Uzalis.

ceedings of the Donatists and Circumcelliones—all this may serve to extenuate what nothing can excuse.

As we proceed on our way through the fifth century, we perceive the mind of man passing, more and more, under the shadow of the long obscuration from which it waited the lapse of ages to emerge. It was a period of ominous transition. Societies, political and moral, were sinking into that state of depression in which the torpor of ignorance finds relief only in the abuses of reason. The vast structure, cemented by habits of such long duration, was in a rapid course of dilapidation and dispersion. No sound literature can be looked for in times so convulsed and barbarous. All was fluctuating with the changes and chances of physical force, in the absence of political rights and moral duties. Except a few schools of unprofitable instruction at Constantinople, Antioch, Alexandria, Nisibis, and Edessa, learning, such as it was, was driven into monastic establishments. The military masters of conquered Italy sought only for themselves the glories of the field ; and if learning lived in any respect among them, it was principally on account of its alliance with superstition, and the uses to which it was applied as the organ of priestly rites and unintelligible mysteries. History presents to us, in this last chapter of Roman greatness, the social man in a most degenerate condition. By a downward tendency and the momentum of an irresistible gravitation, all things belonging to mind and its energies were reduced so low in the scale of intelligence, grace, or ability, that hardly enough remained for the expansion or exercise of its capacities. Such was antiquated Rome and the Roman world during the long period of its tardy declension. The barbarous ages which succeeded to the catastrophe of the ancient capital exhibit in the pages of history a sad and monotonous sameness. Its degradation reached its lowest depression about the middle of the fifth century, till which time it seemed to linger on till its final extinction, in the year 476. Three times the "Eternal City" was besieged ; once sacked and pillaged by Alaric and his Goths, and once again by Genseric and his Vandals ; and all its fairest provinces were laid waste by Attila and his Huns. The Decii, the Fabii, the Africani, and Cornelii, were faintly traced in shadow by a Maximus, an Avitus, an Anthemius, an Olybrius, a Glycerius, a Nepos, and an Augustulus. The staple of its destiny was reduced to its last thread. Imperial Rome looked no more from her seven hills upon an abject world. Her literature struggled but feebly with its fate. Being used only as the organ of bad taste and mean conceptions, it was deprived by degrees of its masculine and indigenous strength, and sunk to the level of the service in which it was employed. In this beginning of what we call the middle ages, which may properly be placed in the latter portion of the fifth century, we look in vain for more classic names than those of Ennodius, Macrobius, Salvian, Vincentius of Lerins, Sidonius Apollinaris, Claudianus, Mamertus, and Dracontius. The philosophy of Plato continued long to take the lead in all the studies of the West; but as the Greeks seemed never to have obtained a familiar footing in the Western Churches, the treasures locked up in that accurate and comprehensive language were only imparted to the Latin students and divines through the medium of their own tongue; and thus the wisdom of Plato was constrained to bear the yoke of the Latin translation of Victorinus.[1]

The prelates of the Church were far from remiss in using the means which their superior learning, divine and human, afforded them of confirming their dominion over the conscience, and promoting their sacerdotal aggrandizement; but in the highest ecclesiastical grades lay the most animated scene of contention. The Constantinopolitan bishops asserted an entire equality with the bishops of Rome in jurisdiction and authority, allowing only a nominal precedency to the see of the ancient capital. With the consent of their own emperors, they stretched their spiritual rule over the provinces of Asia, Thrace, Pontus, and Illyricum, accompanying each extension of authority with fresh exactions of homage and submission. These pretensions of the Eastern metropolis were vehemently opposed by the see of Rome; and the struggle was fiercely maintained during the whole pontificate of Leo I., or the Great, as he has generally been called, in reference to the loftiness of his character and the duration of his power. If the subjection of the bishops and archbishops of the East and West to the sovereign pretensions of the see of Rome was not entirely achieved in the time of Leo I., at least the foundation was laid, by his ambitious hand, of that system of tyranny and blasphemy by which all Europe was enslaved during the entire period which we call the middle ages, till, in the insolence of security, it lost all the decency of self-restraint, and the most ordinary apprehension of truth and honour, and at length proceeded to such extravagance of usurpation and abuse as to provoke the indignation of insulted reason and violated humanity. These unwarranted accumulations of power were traceable through a continued series of subtle contrivances, showing, in a striking manner, the uniform action and tendency of ambition when its agency is set in motion in a specific direction, and with what correspondence of design it draws into its current the diversities of character, quality, and condition. Each successive pope, if he was unable to add to what had been gained by his predecessor, took care to lose nothing of what had been once acquired, and every deposit was handed down, if not with usury, with inviolability, through a dynasty of usurpation and imposture. The Bishop of Rome, having grounded his sovereignty on his asserted succession to the chair of St. Peter, claimed a pre-eminence among his own order by Divine authority, and soon threatened with excommunication from the Church of Christ all other churches which refused submission to his decrees. Other churches were not slow in disputing among themselves their relative claims to superiority; and the bishops of the capital of the Roman world availed themselves, with admirable address, of these subordinate contests to draw perpetual appeals to their own assumed supremacy. They placed vicars from their own see over churches incontestably out of their own jurisdiction, and from mediators, soon rose to be judges in all ecclesiastical disputes. The rites and usages of their own Church they claimed an apostolical authority to impose upon all others.[1]

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[1] See August. 'Confess.' lib. VIII. c. 2, s. 1.

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[1] The division of the empire by Constantine the Great was followed by the division of the Christian Churches in an order agreeable to the relative importance and dignity of the cities and districts. Popular feeling, habit, and prejudice had, doubtless, an influence in accommodating the one to the other; but what was, in some cases probably, the effect of custom or accident, became confirmed by the practice of one or other of the great Councils. At length it was resolved, at the general Council of Chalcedon, by its 28th Canon, that bishops should have precedence according to the dignity of the cities over which they presided, as settled by the secular constitutions of the empire; and thus to the see of Rome was conceded a nominal rank above all other bishoprics. But Innocent I., who was seated in the papal chair from 402 to 417, claimed a superiority as well in power as in rank; not as grounded on the dignity or priority of the capital, but as derived, in regular succession, from St. Peter; and this

But these arrogant pretensions of the Bishop of Rome were not maintained without frequent collisions with the ambitious claims of other churches. The five patriarchal Bishops of Alexandria, Antioch, Constantinople, Jerusalem, and Cæsarea, were each sufficiently tenacious of their rank and jurisdiction, and, though they were engaged with each other in the struggles of perpetual competition, which gave to the Pope the advantage of assuming from time to time the privilege of arbitration, yet they were by no means acquiescing spectators of his ambitious projects. Constantinople especially stood out long for her patriarchal prerogatives, and Acacius, above all, is said to have put forward his ambitious claims without moderation or limit. The Eastern prelates had the advantage of the support of the emperors; but those of Western Christendom found, in the disorder which accompanied everywhere the progress of the barbarian armies, the acknowledged benefit of the reverence which their sacred character threw around them, and which enabled them to act with a salutary influence in checking the destructive fury of the conquerors of Rome and her provinces. The warlike people who had taken the place of the Roman citizens, and had now nearly parcelled the provinces of the Western empire among themselves, after they had assumed the name and profession of Christians, looked for no higher morality in the clergy under whose spiritual control they were now placed, than they had been accustomed to witness when under the superstitious yoke of their own priests; and they were not unwilling to yield them the same homage which had belonged to the ministers of their own idolatrous worship. So that while the imperial city, with her subject world, was humbled to the dust by the sword of the barbarous invader, the Churches of Italy and Gaul, under the conduct of their great ecclesiastical head, erected on the ruins of the scattered empire a proud supremacy which secured its continuation by engaging on its side all the passions and corruptions of our nature. The great characteristic of the Church in these unhappy times was the selfish and in-

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pretension was always asserted with the greatest pertinacity. The title of Apostolic see seems to have been first assumed in all public instruments by Zosimus, the immediate successor of Innocent, during his short reign from 417 to 419; and, not content with the mere assumption of this style and designation, that ambitious pontiff was wont to use the phrase, "For so it hath pleased the Apostolic see."

satiable appetite for power, which, after long-continued contests, seemed to settle at length in some partial currents of successful usurpation, sometimes resulting from imperial favour, sometimes from the mere preponderance of numerical strength, and more often from the personal policy, courage, or dexterity of an aspiring individual.

Under the titles of Metropolitans, Primates, and Patriarchs, the honours and privileges of each were furiously contested, especially the right of ordaining bishops, which, by several successive councils of the fifth century, was at length vested in the metropolitans. This right was, however, pronounced to be invalid, in the Eastern provinces, without the consent of the Patriarchs of Constantinople and Alexandria; and the Patriarch of Rome, always in advance some steps beyond his peers, claimed a right to ordain the bishops of all the provinces of the West, which became an endless source of strife and mutual animosity.

It may, indeed, be subject to doubt whether the exorbitant claim last above-mentioned was prosecuted openly and pertinaciously till after the pontificate of Leo the Great, or towards the beginning of the sixth century. In the eighty-ninth epistle, addressed to the bishops of Gaul by that priestly potentate, we find him, professedly, at least, disclaiming the right of ordaining bishops in that diocese. The object which principally engrossed his active and ardent mind was to exalt the dignity and jurisdiction of his see above the rival claims of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. The opposition of the Eastern Patriarch was fiercely maintained, having the proximity of the imperial court to second his pretensions, and the twenty-eighth canon of the Council of Chalcedon, held in 451, which decreed the equality of the two patriarchal jurisdictions of Rome and Constantinople. But the Patriarchs of Alexandria and Antioch, being unable to contend with the Patriarch of Constantinople, were often desirous of the power of the Roman Patriarch to support their rights; and to the same tribunal recourse was had by the bishops when oppressed by the ascendency of the see of Constantinople. By a dextrous encouragement of these appeals the ascendency of Rome was gradually promoted and secured. And the rapidly-declining authority of the emperors left the Bishop at liberty to assume all the power which the barbarians were disposed, both by policy and superstition, to exalt and conciliate by the amplest privileges and endowments.

No Roman pontiff of the fifth century followed out with more unwearied zeal, and made a more dextrous use of the means thus afforded by the leading of events, than Leo I., usually called the Great, who was the contemporary of many successive emperors, with an influence derived from his personal character and mental acquirements that gave him the most prominent place in the history of those times. He was the forty-fourth Bishop of Rome, to which see his learning, his address as a politician, and his general talents for business, procured his promotion. Having held for some time the important station of archdeacon of the Romish Church, he was employed, while in that capacity, by the Emperor Valentinian III. and Placidia his mother, to save the empire from the direful effects of an impending quarrel between the two great military leaders, Ætius and Albinus. His commission was so ably and effectually executed, by reconciling the contending parties, that on the death of Sixtus III., though at that time at a considerable distance from Rome, he was elected without competition to the vacant seat, which he filled, in a manner worthy of the highest expectations which had been formed concerning him, from the year 440 to 461.

No pope was more conspicuous than Leo for steadiness of purpose in promoting the exaltation of the papal see; but let it be recorded, to the credit of his principles, that his spiritual labours were no less earnest and persevering than his ambition. He considered it part of the pontifical duty to preach to his people, and ninety-six of his sermons have reached our own times—thirty-two on the fast of the Ember week, and twelve on that of Lent. One hundred and forty-one of his letters are still extant, chiefly on the importance of a revival of the ancient Church discipline; but, about five years after the elevation of Leo to his see, he gave a practical proof of his lofty idea of the authority which belonged to a Bishop of Rome, when Celidonius, the Bishop of Besançon, appealed to him against the sentence whereby, at the instance of Hilarius, Bishop of Arles, he had been deposed upon certain charges exhibited against him before a council, composed of some of the bishops of Gaul. The Bishop of

Arles repaired to Rome to oppose this appeal, and probably to dispute the right of arbitration assumed by the Roman Bishop. The dispute appears to have been carried on with great animation, and if we are to credit Leo, in a case so nearly touching his own character, Hilarius was intemperate in the discussion and neglected the homage due to his ecclesiastical superior, from whose pen alone the account of this affair has come down to us. But if we are governed in our opinion by the facts, it will not be much in favour of the mildness or forbearance of Leo; for upon the breaking up of the conference, without regard to Hilarius's eminence in the Church, he caused him to be seized, and put under an arrest, upon no graver charge than his resisting the arbitrary pretensions of the Roman pontiff, and asserting the independence of the Gallican Churches, which had presumed to decide a cause, of which Leo claimed to be the supreme and ultimate judge.

For the exercise of this usurped jurisdiction a day was appointed, on which the pontiff was to sit in solemn judgment; but in the mean time Hilarius found means to escape from his confinement, and with difficulty arrived at Arles in safety. The resentment of Leo broke through all restraints. The decree of the Council of Arles was at once pronounced to be a nullity; the charge against Celidonius, of having married a widow, was declared to be disproved; Celidonius was restored to his dignity, and Hilarius was declared to be suspended from his episcopal functions. It was on this occasion that the ambitious claim to adjudicate in all matters in difference or dispute among the bishops and inferior clergy of the Churches of the West, was assumed and steadily insisted on as an inherent prerogative of the Bishop of Rome; and though it was long before the point was fully and finally conceded, this memorable incident seemed to lead the way to the establishment of the spiritual tyranny of Rome over the Church in general. A rescript for vesting in that see an authority over all the bishops and Churches of the Gallican provinces was obtained from Valentinian III., a weak prince, easily induced to promote the ambitious designs of the pontiff. This instrument, which was directed to the General of forces in Gaul, called upon the Churches of that part of the empire to pay implicit obedience to the Apostolic see; and was the beginning of an expansive claim, which at length succeeded in covering the greater portion of the prostrate world with its abuses and abominations. The arrogance of Leo, seconded by imperial authority, the prejudice of the Roman name, and the credit of apostolical succession, prevailed in the contest with the Bishop of Arles. That prelate, unable to bear up against such advantages, acknowledged the primacy of the Roman see, and its claims to respectful submission, but without surrendering the independent jurisdiction and privileges of his own metropolitan Church. It was the work of centuries, by gradual accretions, to raise the papal power to its tyrannical consummation; but from the time of Leo, through all the stages of its progress, claims, however arrogant, have never been abandoned, and every succeeding pope has considered as a sacred trust each robbery and usurpation of his predecessors.

The most material part of the ecclesiastical history of the fifth century is involved in the transactions of Leo I., or, as some will have him called, Leo the Great. Only a short space intervened between Augustin and the accession of Leo to the popedom; the Bishop of Hippo having left the world which he had filled with his name in the year of our Lord 430, and Leo having begun his ambitious career in 440, and ended it in 461. The Manichees, driven from Africa, soon after the death of Augustin and the conquest of Carthage by Genseric, found their way in great numbers to Rome, where they spread their influence in secret. With this inveterate sect was Leo's first controversy after his personal contention with the Bishop of Arles. It drew forth a full display of the polemical powers of the Roman pontiff. No persuasion led to so many abominations in practice, nor was any heresy more constantly exposed to fiercer persecution. Yet it lived on for many ages, having obstinately maintained its footing to the beginning of the ninth century. Not only the Roman emperors, but various other princes, used their strenuous efforts to extirpate this pestilent error. Hunneric, the son and successor of Genseric, caused many of the principals of the sect to be burnt alive, and drove others of them out of his dominions. In many other parts they were unsparingly massacred. The Emperor Gratian, by a decree issued in the year 379, granted to the Christians of all persuasions a free toleration, excepting only the Manichees, the Photinians, and Eunomians. In the year 381, the Manichees were declared infamous by a decree of Theodosius, and incapable of taking any property under a will or by inheritance. They had been living in a studied concealment at Rome when Leo was raised to the papal dignity; but their proceedings were soon brought to light by his vigilance; and a remarkable depravation of the morals of the people at this juncture was traced to the poisonous tendencies of their principles. A great number of the sect was seized, together with their bishop, and their mysteries were fully exposed by Leo, as far as respect for the feelings of shame and modesty would allow them to be revealed to the public. Some were converted, more were banished, and Leo, by a circular epistle, impressed upon all a sense of the danger with which all Christendom was threatened by the diffusion of these detestable doctrines. The credit and influence of Leo easily obtained an edict from the Emperor Valentinian, dated 19th June, 445, whereby all the laws made by his predecessors against this scandalous community were confirmed. They were banished from all the cities of the empire, made incapable of holding any offices civil or military, and thrown out of the protection of the law; their contracts were pronounced to have no force, and all the subjects of the empire were called upon to inform against them. Still, however, they gloried in their punishment, persevered in maintaining and defending their tenets, and kept their ground, in spite of all the exertions of Leo and his successors, till towards the middle of the ninth century, when they seem to have lost their influence, if not their existence, as a sect.

The Priscillianists, whose doctrines, as far as they were intelligible, bore a great resemblance to those of the Manichees, occasioned another trouble to the pontificate of Leo. Their tenets were variously apprehended and represented, being by themselves but confusedly maintained and incoherently promulgated. In their defence, much dissimulation and falsehood were used, under the sanction of a principle especially adopted by this sect, and too much countenanced among many theologians of the fourth and fifth centuries, which took from mendacity its proper shame when colourably conducive to a religious purpose. Marc, the founder of the sect, a native of Memphis in Egypt, who had rendered himself famous by his magical impostures, was a follower of the doctrines of the Manichees. From Egypt he travelled into Spain, where he attracted many disciples.

There, after his absurd and iniquitous creed had for a time found entertainment among some persons of rank and influence, it was adopted by Priscillian,[1] a man of considerable weight and eloquence, who was made Bishop of Avila, by the interest of his powerful connections. He was banished by the Emperor Gratian from the territories of Spain, but came back in the year 384; and, in the following year, being accused before the usurper Maximus, he was, with several of his associates, capitally condemned and executed; being the first heretic of the Christian name whose blood was shed by the secular authority, in pursuance of his condemnation by an ecclesiastical tribunal. But, although somewhat checked by this sanguinary punishment, the heresy continued to spread, both in Spain and Gaul, till about the middle of the sixth century. Syricius, the immediate successor of Damasus, who held the papal office from 384 to 398, had been very earnest in the suppression of the Priscillianists, in which endeavours he was well supported by the secular power; but his efforts were unavailing; and it required all the superior energy and intelligence of Leo the Great to keep these disturbers of the peace of the Church and social life under necessary awe and decent restraint.

A passage extracted by Orosius from an epistle of Priscillian gives reason to suspect that his meaning (if any was distinctly present to his own mind), was very imperfectly understood, even by those who were professedly initiated. But from all that we gather concerning him and his opinions, his system involved all the absurdities of the Gnostics and Manicheans. The following were the leading tenets of him and his followers: that matter was eternal; that our bodies are the work of evil angels; that the material universe did not owe its origin to God; neither was

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[1] Priscillian is thus described by Sulp. Severus: "Familia nobilis; prædives opibus; acer, inquies, facundus; multa lectione eruditus; disserendi ac disputandi promptissimus; felix profecto, si non pravo studio corrupisset optimum ingenium. Prorsus multa in eo animi et corporis bona cerneres. Vigilare multum; famem ac sitim ferre poterat. Habendi minime cupidus; utendi parcissimus; sed idem vanissimus, et plus justo inflatior profanarum rerum scientia. Quin et magicas artes ab adolescentia exercuisse creditum est. Is ubi doctrinam exitiabilem aggressus est, multos nobilium, pluresque populares, auctoritate persuadendi et arte blandiendi allicuit in societatem. Ad hoc, mulieres, novarum rerum cupidæ, fluxa fide, et ad omnia curioso ingenio, catervatim ad eum confluebant. Quippe humilitatis speciem ore et habitu prætendens, honorem sui et reverentiam cunctis injecerat."—Sulp. Sev. 'Sac. Hist.' lib. II. c. 60.

God the regulator of its changes and modifications; that the soul was a particle of the Divinity, separated from the substance of God; that the Devil is the author of the forced union of the soul and body; that there were not Three Persons in the Godhead; and with respect to the person of Christ, they seem to have denied Him a real body, and a human soul; they forbade the eating of flesh, and considered marriage and the procreation of children to be unallowable, as operating to the multiplication of the products of an infernal agency. Such appear to have been some of their visionary and demoralising tenets; nevertheless, the imputation of a dissolute and vicious practice seems to have been destitute of proof. Their speculative opinions tended rather towards asceticism; and among the ambiguous reports which have reached us of the character of this sect, the most worthy of credit is that which attributes to them great strictness and austerity of manners. History now only recognises the sect of Priscillianists as having clouded for awhile the element of orthodoxy till sense and reason were vindicated by its dispersion.

The profane and impure doctrines of Manes and Priscillian had kept the mind of Leo in agitation and anxiety from the commencement of his pontificate to the year 448, when the heresy of Eutyches began to involve the Church in a still more perplexed and angry disputation. Eutyches was the abbot of a monastery near Constantinople, in which he had lived for seventy years, in great reputation for abstinence and self-mortification. It seems that the publication of the errors of Nestorius drew him from his seclusion, and engaged him in one of the fiercest controversies that had ever divided the Church. The real differences between the combatants on either side, in the maintenance of the dogmas of Eutyches and Nestorius, were often undiscernible amidst the dust and smoke of the combat; and the sharpest feeling of hostility in either party arose out of their mistakes of each other's meaning. In the progress of the disputation they were thrown farther from each other, and both to a greater distance from the standard of orthodoxy. Those who maintained that standard as authoritatively pronounced by apostolical men in the gravest assemblies, and therefore distinguished by the name of Catholic, were chargeable, no doubt, with the fault of imputing to both the Nestorian and Eutychian heresies doctrines which, when seen through the mist and confusion of multiplied divisions and distractions, assumed distorted and exaggerated appearances. It was much to be lamented that no truce interposed to furnish an opportunity for candid parley, and the right adjustment of the points in dispute. The application by Nestorius of the word Χριστοτόκος to Mary, as the mother of Christ, rather than the word Θεοτόκος, the mother of God, was treated as grossly heretical by the maintainers of the orthodox creed; and yet, if it be true, as his apologists have asserted, that he was not unwilling to call the Holy Virgin the mother of the God-Man, as a phrase of less tremendous import, and more, as he thought, expressive of the complex person of the Saviour, if he allowed that it was man in union with God, that is One Christ, that was crucified, suffered, died, and was buried, but denied that Christ, as far as He was God, was subject to these changes, His Divine nature being perfectly impassible, his defects would hardly have justified the hard measure he received from his opponents. He seems, indeed, to have imperfectly comprehended and expressed the inseparable union of the Divine and human natures in the person of Christ, and to have explained the connection as an indwelling of the Son of God in the human body, considering the flesh of the Saviour as the temple of the Divinity. In expression, at least, he considered the human nature as the instrument whereby the Son of God executed His great work upon earth. Eutyches was erroneous respecting the two natures of the Saviour, not seeing that the human nature of Christ was still wholly human notwithstanding the union, and that the Divine nature continued, after the union was completed, what it ever was—invested with eternal glory, infinite power, wisdom, and goodness.

The defects and discrepancies of the doctrines severally maintained by Nestorius, Apollinaris, and Eutyches long perplexed the subject of the incarnation; and if Leo deserved the title of "Great," it was not so much by his example and success as a ruler and a potentate, as by the wise and discriminating firmness with which he encountered and defeated the subtle dogmas of these various disputers, who appear to have had too much satisfaction in propagating difficulties, and expatiating beyond the bounds of temperate research.

The Council of Chalcedon, in conformity with the opinion and the dictates of Leo, explained the Θεάνθρωπος by declaring the doctrine of the two natures of Christ combined in one complete individual subsistence or person, in virtue of a connection like that of the soul and body in man, and expressed by the terms hypostatic union. In this union the Divine and human natures were to be understood as distinct, the confusion or mixing of the two natures after the union being the error of Eutyches. He was charged with treading in the steps of Apollinaris, whose heresy mainly consisted in denying the substantial verity of the human nature after the union, and making the Divinity the sole subsistence, liable to the accidents and properties of the body, in which supposition was involved the profane and blasphemous inference of the passibility of the Godhead.

The mystery, though beyond human capacity to comprehend, must be understood in a way to exclude the supposition that Deity suffered either change or pain. Though united in the one person, the two natures remained distinct, and only that which was human endured the Cross. That suffering, and the redemption which it wrought, are, nevertheless, to be ascribed to the one Person, in whom the two natures were united; whereby the passion of the Saviour received an infinite value and merit, being undergone by Him who was both God and man, not in His Divine, but in His human nature.

The Christian faith, then, is this, according to the belief of Leo, and the confession of the Council of Chalcedon, that "as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ," Who, though in the singleness of His person He suffered for our salvation, yet knew neither change nor sorrow in His heavenly substance distinctly considered. God and man became one Christ, "not by the conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by taking the manhood into God;" and the human nature was assumed into the personality of the Godhead, not by confusion of substance, but by unity of person." All the properties of the Person belonged to both natures united, so that what was done and suffered by Christ was attributable to the Person consisting of both natures. The human nature, by its union with the Divine nature, has personality, but has none of its own.[1] The Person suffered, but only in his human nature; and yet what is predicated of the Person is predicated of God in the unity of the Person, though not in His separate nature. In this view of the subject we avoid both the Apollinarian and the Eutychian aberrations; while, by conjoining both natures in the personal unity, we are clear from the error of Nestorius. The unity of the Godhead and the manhood being like that which is between the soul and the body, the Son of God is said to have suffered, and the Son of man to have come down from heaven. In this understanding of the mystery we see in what sense God is said to have purchased His Church with His own blood;[1] to have laid down His life for us;[2] and the Lord of Glory to have been crucified.[3]

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[1] The Nestorians taught that there were two natures, and also two substances in Christ, *each of which had its own personality.*

In the same way the acts done by the body are said to have been done by the soul, because of their union in one Person; and what the soul does, and only can do, is spoken of as done by the body because of their union. Distinctly considered, the flesh can do nothing spiritual; neither understand, nor worship, nor sin, nor praise, nor pray; yet all these acts are ascribed to the flesh, without mention of the soul: as, "All flesh shall see the salvation of God;"[4] "By the works of the law shall no flesh be justified;"[5] and to the same effect might many other passages be produced from the sacred writings. The subject is to be treated with the greatest circumspection and awe; clinging in love to the blessed fruits of the incarnation, and climbing in thought to the glory incomprehensible of the Son of God, who came down from heaven not to forsake His own kingdom and His unchangeable bliss with the Father, but to manifest Himself to the world, and in human form and flesh to accomplish His vicarious sacrifice. "No man," said our Lord to Nicodemus, "hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which *is* in heaven." He who fills heaven and earth with His presence, was still in heaven as much after, as before, His personal union with our nature. The Son of God is everywhere present, but it has pleased Him to manifest Himself specially by peculiar acts of goodness and power; nor can it be thought inconsistent with the Divine Majesty to act upon human nature, without being acted upon by it. The mighty Ruler of the hierarchies of heaven assumed upon earth the fallen nature of His sinful creatures, to effect His adorable design of repurchasing, in the person of which He has deigned to become an integral part, man's lost inheritance of holiness and joy.

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[1] Acts xx. 28.
[2] 1 John iii. 16.
[3] 1 Cor. ii. 8.
[4] Luke iii. 6.
[5] Gal. ii. 16.

The character of Eutyches was too much implicated with subjects of bitter and implacable controversy to be transmitted to us through a medium of candour or justice. He was the abbot or superior of a Byzantine monastery, in which he had grown old before his name became known in council and debate. His days during his long seclusion appear to have been spent in peaceful sanctity; and though his attainments and abilities have been spoken of by some in terms of contempt, by others they have been very differently regarded. Leo did not hesitate to call him an ignorant dotard;[1] and Petavius records him as a man of more than ordinary dulness;[2] but these low estimates of his capacity were the dictates, probably, of those extreme animosities with which all religious contentions were carried on at the period under consideration. His firmness and decision in the maintenance of his opinions before the Councils at Ephesus and Chalcedon raise him above the mediocrity of his day in sense and sagacity; and what is recorded of him, if true, speaks much for the credit of his understanding and discernment—he followed, it is said, the Scriptures only, as a much safer guide than the expositions of the Fathers.

While a synod was assembled at Constantinople, Eusebius, Bishop of Dorylæum, who had been living in intimacy with Eutyches, and had striven in vain to convince him of his errors, thought it his duty to charge him before the Council with the heresy of denying the two natures in the Son of God. The communication was received with shouts of indignation, and Flavian, who presided in the Council as the Bishop of Constantinople, a man of candour and mild deportment, was reluctantly constrained to join in the anathemas which were vociferated throughout the assembly. But the proceedings of the Synod of Constantinople were far exceeded in noise and violence by the Council soon after held at Ephesus, which totally annulled and reversed the sentence which had been pronounced against Eutyches. This second Council of Ephesus, assembled by the express authority of the Emperor Theodosius, but under the tyrannical influence of Dioscorus, the Patriarch of Alexandria, amidst such confusion and uproar as is only witnessed when the passions which bring us nearest to the tenants of the forest are let loose upon each other, decided in favour of Eutyches, and covered with their anathemas the doctrine of his opponents. The violence which prevailed, unsuited as it was to the quality of the question before them, was in melancholy keeping with the character of those times—immersed in vain pursuits, vainer altercations, and, what was vainer still, vehement and vituperative quarrels about words of unsettled meanings, meanings without settled phrases, and subtleties—the growth of a profane and presumptuous intermeddling with mysteries which refuse the handling of an earth-born philosophy.

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[1] Ep. xxiv. 26, 27.

[2] 'Petav. Dogm.' lib. I. c. 14.

This second Council of Ephesus was well denominated the Latrocinium Ephesinum, or *συνοδὸς λῃστρικὴ*, for surely no banditti in their quarrels about their plunder could have broken out into greater violence. Two legates[1] from Leo sat in the assembly, which included about ten metropolitans, and as many suffragans from the dioceses of Egypt, Thrace, Pontus, Antioch, Asia, and Illyricum ; the monks, also, were allowed to be represented by Barsumas the Syrian ; and Julian and Hilary acted as the legates or vicars of the see of Rome. The whole Council numbered about a hundred and fifty, over whom Dioscorus presided. In this assembly the Oriental bishops, headed by Domnus, the metropolitan of Antioch, were the strenuous opposers of Eutyches, whose cause was in the hands of those who, coming from Egypt, the devoted adherents of Dioscorus, brought with them a furious spirit bent upon carrying their points at whatever sacrifice of order, decency, or justice. In this drama, which had a tragical termination, the Patriarch of Alexandria distinguished himself most by his arbitrary and violent proceedings, to whom was opposed Domnus, the above-named Patriarch of Antioch, a man of moderate principles, but far below the Egyptian prelate in subtlety and talents. Cyril was the model which Dioscorus, his successor in the see of Alexandria, was most ambitious of copying, especially in his hatred of Nestorius and his doctrines, which had now become the subject of an unextinguishable feud between the Oriental and the Egyptian prelates. His part in this quarrel engaged Dioscorus on the side of Eutyches with his characteristic violence, as being at farthest distance from Nestorius and his followers.

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[1] These legates were sent by Leo with the style of Legates de latere suo, a title conferred for the first time on these representatives of the papal sovereignty.

Such was the state of parties, and such the elements of discord, in the turbulent scene which, in the year 449, was displayed at Ephesus, under the name and form of a General Council. Dioscorus, who had long played the part of a tyrant in his see of Alexandria, brought with him to Ephesus the same habits. He came attended by a numerous train of adherents, who, being attached to the same dogmas, had learned to regard him as their leader, and implicitly to obey his dictates and directions. But that which supported him most effectually in his usurpation of absolute authority, and in his contemptuous treatment of his opponents at this remarkable meeting, was the countenance of the Emperor and the presence of his troops, who were sent thither ostensibly to maintain order, but really to secure the victory to Dioscorus and the followers of Eutyches.

Leo declared his entire approbation of all that had been done with respect to Eutyches and his doctrines at the synod which had been held at Constantinople, and of which he had been fully informed, and instructed his legates on their setting out to attend at the Council of Ephesus, to act in concert with Flavian, in the part which he knew he would take in that assembly. The pontiff's letter to Flavian, on the topics involved in this angry controversy, added greatly to the reputation and authority of the writer. The mystery of the incarnation was so satisfactorily explained in that document, as to make it regarded by many of the Churches of the West as a standard of orthodoxy, and the best interpreter of Scripture on that great topic. Other letters from the same hand, written to the Emperor Theodosius, to the Empress Pulcheria, and to one of the abbots of Constantinople, were composed with an earnest effort to establish the doctrine of the two natures in Christ, and to confute what were considered to be tenets of Eutyches on that intricate and awful subject.

This second Council of Ephesus met in the great church where the first Council had been held eighteen years before, in number one hundred and forty-nine, reckoning the bishops and their deputies. Dioscorus sat as president, by the Emperor's express order, on a chair of state. Flavian, who was placed below both the bishops of Antioch and Jerusalem, was, together with those who had joined in condemning Eutyches at the Council of Constantinople, excluded, as being parties, from the right of suffrage on this occasion. Eutyches laid before the Council a written confession of faith, which, having been read and allowed, Flavian called upon Eusebius of Dorylæum to read and make good his charges against Eutyches. In this he was supported by the legates from Rome, but was opposed and hindered by the Emperor's commissioners, who represented him in the Council, on the plea that their business was only to inquire into the acts of the Council previously held at Constantinople on the same charges, and not to examine anew the doctrines of Eutyches. This course being adopted, the proceedings of the former Council relating to the case of Eutyches were produced in their order without disturbance, till the part taken by Eusebius in urging Eutyches to acknowledge two natures in Christ after the incarnation came under view, and then all was confusion and uproar, in the midst of which voices were heard calling down upon Eusebius the bitterest execrations, and vociferously demanding that whoever maintained the existence of two natures might be anathematised, driven out, and torn in pieces. No authority was paramount in this tumult but that of Dioscorus, whose arbitrary dictation, accompanied by violent gestures and menaces, seconded and enforced by the presence of the soldiers introduced into the church by the Emperor's commissioners, and followed by a furious mob of monks, bore down all resistance, and made everyone present entirely the instrument of his will. Nor does it appear that Flavianus or the legates of Leo dared to oppose the restitution of Eutyches to the communion of the Church and the government of his monastery. He was reinstated by an acclamation, against which no voice was heard.

Next followed the deposition of Flavianus and Eusebius, to which the Pope's legates made a fruitless resistance. Some of the bishops ventured to intercede with Dioscorus in behalf of Flavianus, which exposed them to violent treatment, from which they sheltered themselves as well as they could, till at length all opposition sunk under the superiority of physical force. Flavianus, who alone had courage to dissent, though filling the high office of Archbishop of Constantinople, was set upon and cruelly beaten by Dioscorus and his faction ; after which, being dragged by the soldiers to Epipas in Lydia, a short distance from Ephesus, he there expired in a few days. This treatment of Flavianus was followed by the deposition of many of the Oriental bishops, after which Dioscorus left Ephesus, and this extraordinary Council, which has hardly a right to be recorded by that name in the annals of the Church, was dissolved. Nevertheless, the Emperor confirmed by an edict all that was done at this disorderly meeting, having been kept in ignorance respecting its proceedings and character, and misled by deceptious reports of the nature and merits of the points discussed.

After this second Council of Ephesus, so disgraceful to the Church and to the character of the times, the imperial authority in the East, in conjunction with that of the Patriarch of Egypt, continued to support, with much zeal and effort, the doctrine of Eutyches, or Monophysitism ; while the doctrine of the two natures enjoyed the more efficient support of Valentinian and the Roman pontiff in the West. Leo was soon in action ; a Roman synod was forthwith assembled, which pronounced the Ephesian convention to be no legitimate council, and all its decisions to be null and void. The thunders of excommunication were reciprocated with equal vehemence between Rome and Alexandria, till the death of Theodosius and the succession of Marcion, by his marriage with Pulcheria the sister of the deceased Emperor, opened the way for the great œcumenical council held at Chalcedon, which is said to have been attended by six hundred and thirty bishops, all—six only excepted—being prelates of the Greek Church. Before the meeting of this great assembly, Anatolius, who had been chosen Bishop of Constantinople in the room of Flavianus, assembled the ecclesiastical dignitaries then in Constantinople, and having read and signed the famous epistle of Leo to Flavianus, anathematised Nestorius, Eutyches, and the followers of their respective doctrines, and proclaimed his entire concurrence with the Roman Church on the great subject of the incarnation. The other bishops then present followed the example of the Patriarch. Eutyches was condemned, and Dioscorus ceased to terrify.

The Council of Chalcedon held its first meeting in the great church of Euphemia, on the 8th October, 451. The Emperor Marcian was represented by six of his principal officers of state, and others of senatorial dignity, who ruled and regulated the proceedings, though the special office of presiding among the bishops appears to have been conceded to the legates of Leo, who prefaced the business of the Council by producing an order from the Pope, as the head of all the Churches, by which his apostleship deigned to pronounce (præcipere dignatus est ejus Apostolatus) that Dioscorus, Bishop of Alexandria, should not be allowed to sit in the Council as a judge, being a person arraigned and accused as a criminal before his judges. Upon this some contention arose, which ended in the discomfiture of Dioscorus, who was made to take his place in the midst of the assembly as a person under an impeachment. The delinquencies charged on Dioscorus were his maintenance of the one nature only in Christ, his deposition of Flavianus for holding the two natures, and his introduction of an armed force into the Council, by the terror of which all the bishops present were made to sign that act of violent injustice ; besides which, charges were brought against him of living in habits of the grossest violation of the sanctity of his order. Although these several grounds of accusation were met by Dioscorus with firmness and intrepidity, he was condemned, deposed, and banished, the sentence being signed by the whole Council, and confirmed by the Emperor. The place of his confinement was Gangra in Paphlagonia, where in 454, the third year of his exile, he died, anathematising with his dying breath the doctrine of the two natures in Christ posterior to His incarnation.

The letter of Leo to Flavian, the occasion and object of which has been brought before the reader, received the full sanction of this Council among the subjects discussed in the second sitting, and was proclaimed with loud voices to be a sound exposition of doctrine by the assembled Fathers, who were not sparing of their anathemas against those who dared to dispute the perfection of that document. But the definition which was adopted by the Council, representing the Son of God to be composed of two natures, in confutation of the Eutychian hypothesis, was not satisfactory to the Roman pontiff or to the Emperor's commissioners, though vehemently and boisterously contended for by the far greater portion of the prelates there assembled. The whole scene was little consistent with the character and composition of the assembly ; and Luther was but moderately severe in observing of this fourth General Council, that it was without all modesty and civility.[1]

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[1] 'Coll. M.,' ch. 27.

Such was the clamorous state of the assembly in maintaining the opposite sides of this fierce debate on the proper words in which the category of the two natures should be expressed, that it was very long before any approach was made to the settlement of the question, till, at length, the pertinacity of the commissioners, enforced by the imperial authority, and the resolute and menacing exertions of the Pope's legates, prevailed, and the assembly yielded to these combined authorities. It was finally resolved that the doctrine, to be accurately expressed, required that the Son should be described as being not *of* but *in* two natures, not *ἐκ δύο φύσεων* but *ἐν δύο φύσεσιν*.

But all did not proceed in this great Council agreeably to the opinion and wishes of Leo. In the sixth session the Emperor Marcian came in person to the Council, and the discipline of the Church being brought under its consideration, the rank and privileges of the see of Constantinople were raised, by the twenty-eighth canon, to an equality with that of Rome, conceding only to the ancient capital a nominal precedency. The terms of the decree were that the Bishop of New Rome should have the first place of honour after the Bishop of Old Rome. The condemnation of the Eutychians by the Council of Chalcedon put the brand of heresy upon their opinions, and settled the doctrine upon what was considered the highest human authority on which it could be based. But no sooner was the Emperor Marcian removed by death, which happened in the year 457, than it became apparent that everywhere throughout the African and Eastern Churches the followers of Eutyches were extremely numerous, and determined in their opposition to the decision of the Council of Chalcedon on the great question of the two natures. In Alexandria, more especially, the contest ran very high, and gave occasion to very violent and outrageous excesses. The murmurs against Proterius, the immediate successor of Dioscorus, were increased to rage and fury by the calumnies and invectives of his enemies, among whom was Ælurus, in whose person and life were combined all the worst qualities by which those times were characterised.[1] He held a secondary dignity in the Church of Alexandria, which he owed to the favour of

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[1] [His proper name, it appears, was Timotheus, but the cognomen Ælurus (the cat) was appended to it, as Gibbon tells us, in consequence of his nocturnal expeditions. "In darkness and disguise he crept round the cells of the monastery, and whispered the revelation (the vision of a pretended angel) to his slumbering brethren."]—ED.

Dioscorus, to whom he had recommended himself by a great similarity of principles and propensities. His turbulent ambition made his absence necessary to the peace of the Church over which Proterius presided, and he was accordingly banished by a council held at Alexandria under the authority of Proterius in 452; but at the end of about five years, the Emperor Marcian being dead, Ælurus was again in Alexandria, and in great favour with the monks and some of the most powerful of the persons in the court of the Emperor. So well did he use his acquired influence and advantages that the primacy of Alexandria fell into his hands, in the possession of which he was confirmed by the deposition and murder of Proterius, who was assassinated by his means in the church of Quirinus, together with six of his ecclesiastics who had fled for refuge with him to the same sanctuary. The first act of Ælurus, as Archbishop of Alexandria, was to excommunicate Leo, the imperial successor of Marcian, and all the bishops who had embraced the doctrine of the Council of Chalcedon. And the Eutychian heresy was for a while triumphant in Africa.

In the year 460 Gennadius was in possession of the patriarchate of Constantinople, and his influence with the Emperor procured the banishment of Ælurus from the see of Alexandria, and relieved the Roman pontiff from present anxiety on his account. Ælurus was first confined and strictly watched at Gangra in Paphlagonia, till his disorderly proceedings made it expedient to remove him to a distance less favourable to his ambitious views. At the end of seventeen years passed in a gloomy exile in the Taurica Chersonesus, we find him again at Alexandria, seizing by violence the supremacy of that Church. But, after a short continuance, his triumph ended with his life in the year 477.

In the year 459, which was the last year but one of the eventful pontificate of Leo, the usage, which had long prevailed in the Churches of the West, of a public recital of sins which had been privately confessed, and a committal of the same to writing, was suppressed by the authority of Leo, as of dangerous consequence to morals and good government. It seemed to this Pope, that the practice of bringing these secret things to light before the congregation was unnecessary and pernicious. He deemed it enough for the penitent to make his confession first to God, and then to the priest, who was to make intercession for him, and procure the needful remission. And this may be considered as the date of private or auricular confession, under the full sanction of ecclesiastical authority. Nor was public confession in general understood to be interdicted by this arbitrary Pope, but the promulgation in public of such sins as were clandestine, and could transpire only by the revelation of the secret by the sinner himself. The Roman Church has, however, always maintained the confession to a priest to be necessary, as a ground for the remission of sins committed after baptism, and essential as a constituent part of the penitential ordinance.

It seems but of little importance to investigate the origin of the rite of penance, which lies buried behind the rubbish of superstition and priestcraft, or to travel through the various periodical changes in its forms and ceremonies, till it was made a sacrament by the Councils of Florence and Trent. The forms of penance were different in different Churches; but, as far as the practice can be traced, it appears to have been accompanied by the confession of sins, either before the congregation, or to the privileged ear of the priest. The office of penitentiary priest,[1] which had been instituted in most of the Churches from about the middle of the third century, implying a special authority to receive the private confession of all personal sins, and to prescribe and proportion the expiatory mortification by way of penance, was continued, under the same forms and regulations, to the year 390, when the practice was interdicted at Constantinople, and its dependent Churches, by Nectarius, bishop of that city. The abuses of this rite were, doubtless, very numerous as long as it prevailed; but, at the period last above-mentioned, a scandalous advantage taken by a priest of a confession by a woman of rank, was the occasion, according to the account given of the case both by Socrates and Sozomen, of the prohibition of the practice.[2]

How far the authority of Nectarius prevailed against the custom of auricular confession is open to much doubt. The decree of Leo, which put an interdict only on the public disclosure of what had been secretly confessed, implied the existence of the practice under the sanction of the Church at the period of his pontificate. It is to the praise of the early Church that none

[1] 'Ο ἐπὶ τῆς μετάνοιας πρεσβύτερος.

[2] Soc., lib. V. 19; Soz., lib. VII. 16.

of the Fathers of the apostolical or primitive ages laid an obligatory stress upon it as an essential part of Christian duty. Down to the commencement of the thirteenth century, secret confession in the ear of a priest was no part of ecclesiastical discipline. In the fourth Council of Lateran, which was held under Pope Innocent III., in 1215, confession to a priest was first held necessary to salvation. But, long after that Council, the necessity of such confession was the hesitating opinion of the Church. Rhenanus, in his preface to Tertullian's 'Treatise on Penance,' affirms that secret confession as an ordinance was unknown in the days of Tertullian. That edition was published in 1521, and, not many years after, the Council of Trent issued the decree making both penance and auricular confession duties of essential observance, and declaring them, on the authority of the alleged practice of the Church from its Apostolical beginning, to be necessary to salvation.[1]

That the Scriptures in any place enjoin auricular confession of personal sins to a priest, no lover of truth would attempt to prove ; but it is easy to show that some of the Fathers have been the advocates of private confession, as a relief to the conscience, and a means of spiritual help, admonition, and reproof ; and, as persons best qualified by station and experience would naturally be looked for on such occasions, these voluntary confessions would be easily drawn, by the tendency of prejudice and habit, to the province and function of the priest. Although Leo gave the weight of his authority to private confession, it does not appear, from his letter to the bishops of Campania, that he considered the priest as having power to do more than to pray in behalf of the penitent, or to join with him in prayer for the remission of his sins ; and in none of the Churches, either of Rome or the provinces, was the form of absolution otherwise than supplicatory. Absolution by the priest came in with the beginning of the thirteenth century. In England it owed its introduction to Cardinal Ottoboni, the Pope's legate, who required all confessors to use the authoritative form ; which was concluded in these words : "I absolve thee from thy sins, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Penance, to which confession to a priest, and absolution by him are appended, is now a sacrament[1] of the Church of Rome. It was taught in the twelfth century, and strongly urged upon the conscience, by the schoolmen, who followed the leading of Peter Lombard usually called the Master of the Sentences; till it was promulgated as an article of faith, first by the Council of Florence, in the fifteenth century, and then by the Council of Trent, in the sixteenth century, which declared it to be a doctrine necessary to salvation, and imposed it on the belief of the Church, with the usual escort of anathemas.

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[1] ["This bird was hatched," says Bishop Hall, "in the Council of Lateran (an. 1215), fully plumed in the Council of Trent, and now lately hath her feathers imped [lengthened] by the modern casuists."—Bp. Hall's 'Old Religion.']—Ed.

Leo, commonly called the Great, died on the 10th of November, 461, after presiding over the Roman Church twenty-one years. He left a name entitled to the grateful remembrance of the inheritors of his usurped authority, who, with wonderful uniformity of plan and purpose, have persisted in the same ambitious career, under the colour of an apostleship derived from St. Peter and instituted by a Divine ordination. From the death of Leo the affairs of the Church seemed principally to engage the attention of mankind, and give interest to the page of the historian. The quarrels and contests of the competitors for power within its pale occupied, depressed, and contracted the exercise of thought and intelligence. The mind was kept in a factious and vibrating condition of strife and tumultuous agitation. To establish a tyranny over the conscience, and to take all possible advantage of the common proneness to credulity and superstitious fear, was the method used to bring one part of mankind into subjection to the other. The struggles for superiority between Rome and Constantinople transmitted through all the secondary grades of ecclesiastics the like spirit of emulation and rivalry. The conflicting pretensions of the patriarchs, metropolitans, archbishops, bishops, and presbyters, were all that remained to quicken the social body, and stimulate its declining faculties. The heart of Christendom was the centre of business and commotion. The great spirits which, in an earlier age, were characterised by genius and generosity of soul, no longer found exercise in actions of the same worth and enterprise, or in adding to the treasures of accumulated knowledge. The cabals and ambitious contentions which arose out of the perversions and abuses of the Church, its discipline and doctrines, supplied, if not legitimate, at least plausible incitements to activity and emulation. The decay of mental energy manifested in all the efforts of taste, genius, literature, and science, was a melancholy illustration of the affinity between soundness of intellect and honesty of purpose, between clearness of understanding and purity of principle.

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[1] The word sacrament had a loose application in the early ages of the Church. It was used to express sacred rites and mysteries generally; and its occasional use, in expressing the rite of penance, is not to be understood as intimating that that observance was a sacrament ordained and recognised as such by the Church.

The state of the clergy in the fifth century reflected no honour on the Christian name. The acrimony and virulence with which their controversies were maintained, as well on the articles of belief as on the terms in which those articles were enunciated, were only suspended to make way·for the animosities engendered by the jealousies of rival jurisdictions, and by conflicting claims to distinction and priority. To assert the dignity and pre-eminence of the apostolic see appeared to be the great official duty and business of every successive pontiff, from the moment of his elevation to the papal throne ; and as this was respectively an equal object with the primates of Rome and Constantinople, the contests between them on this question were incessant throughout this century. In this protracted struggle Leo was pre-eminent in policy and success. Hilarius, his immediate successor, availed himself of the dispute between the Bishops of Arles and Vienne, respecting the metropolitan power assumed by each over the churches of their respective dioceses ; which produced, as all these subordinate ecclesiastical quarrels were sure to do, an accession of power to the Roman pontiff, as the arbiter and dispenser of the authority contended for by the rival Churches. The reference of these disputes came gradually to be made, as a matter of course, to the chair of St. Peter, as being possessed of a divine right of supremacy, and of a power by inheritance to regulate and decide all the differences among the Churches of Western Christendom.

Hilarius, after a short but anxious struggle to uphold the edifice of pontifical power, died in the year of our Lord 467, and left the pretensions of his predecessor in no degree abated by his moderation. During the pontificate of Simplicius, which followed immediately after that of Hilarius, the Roman empire in the West was brought to its catastrophe. But the event was far from being unfavourable to the usurpations of papal ambition. It suited both the policy and ignorance of the barbarous princes, whose conquests had seated them upon the throne of a monarchy established on the ruins of the empire, to conciliate the favour of the Church authorities, as the means of softening the prejudices of the people, and giving to their rule an air of legitimacy. Simplicius was in no way inferior to Leo in the extent of his ambitious claims. It was in his pontificate that the office of Apostolic Vicar was first instituted, in the person of Zeno, bishop of Seville, and metropolitan of the province of Bœtica, a device not exceeded in subtlety by any before invented for enlarging the bounds of the papal domination, by the assumption it implied of the personal exaltation of the Roman hierarch above all other dignities and sacred orders in the Western Churches.

While Simplicius was supreme in the Roman Church, the sceptre of Constantinople was vibrating between claimants equally unworthy to wield it. Zeno, the son-in-law and successor of Leo, was driven from the throne by Basiliscus, an avowed enemy to the decrees of the Council of Chalcedon, and a supporter of the Eutychian heresy. After reigning for three years, Basiliscus was in his turn compelled to abdicate, and Zeno was restored to his throne, on which he with great difficulty maintained his seat from 477 to 491. The popes were firm in their adherence to the creed and canons of the Council of Chalcedon, while the fluctuating faith of the bishops of Constantinople afforded the pretext for unceasing contention between them and the rulers of the Roman Church, whereof the more prevailing motive was the jealousy of each other's rank and authority, in which they were imitated by all the inferior episcopalities. Acacius, the Patriarch of Constantinople, began his government of that Church with a profession of adherence to the Council of Chalcedon, and with promoting to the see of Alexandria Mongus, an open follower of Eutyches, which was long a subject of vehement contention between the Eastern and Western primates. The quarrel concerning this promotion of one so stained by heresy survived Acacius, and there was kept up for many years a fierce controversy between the Bishops of Rome and Constantinople, respecting the erasure of his name from the episcopal list or register, insisted upon by the popes, and resisted by the Constantinopolitan patriarchs and the Oriental bishops with equal pertinacity. The arrest and imprisonment of the Pope's legates, authorised by the Emperor at the request of Acacius, had further excited the indignation and resentment of the pontiff; and it was reserved for Felix III., the immediate successor of Simplicius, to carry the usurpations of papal arrogance to the near accomplishment of a perfect tyranny over the entire Church of Christ, by summoning the archbishop of the imperial city of the East to appear at a council convened at Rome for trying him as a delinquent. At this council, on his refusal to pay obedience to the summons, he was condemned, anathematised, and deposed. These anathemas were soon reciprocated by the Churches of the East.

This sharp contention between the two great professors of the humbling doctrines of the Cross was continued by a constant interchange of acrimonious letters and embassies, till, under the milder pontificate of Anastasius II., if the question was not entirely set at rest, the quarrel was suspended by the mutual condescension of the primates of the two imperial cities, with the consent and countenance of the Emperor, who bore the same name of Anastasius and was the immediate successor of Zeno.

But it was not until the year 519, in the pontificate of Hormisdas, that the long agitated question of expunging the name of Acacius from the registry of the bishops ceased to be a cause of dissension between Rome and Constantinople, after a contest protracted through a period of thirty-five years.

To bring the whole view of this question of striking out the name of Acacius before our readers, we have outstripped the period of Church history at which we had arrived; and the series of our observations requires that we should return to Zeno, who was restored to the imperial dignity in 477. Immediately on his resumption of power, upon the expulsion of Basiliscus, he engaged himself, in a letter to the Pope, to abolish in his dominions the Eutychian heresy, and to compel all the churches within his provinces to adopt the decrees of the Council of Chalcedon. The suffrages of the whole episcopal body in the East at once went in an opposite course to that in which it had proceeded under the rule of Basiliscus, except in the instances of Paul and Fullo, the bishops respectively of Ephesus and Antioch, who were at once deposed and excommunicated. A council was convened without delay, in which the doctrines of Eutyches were condemned and anathematised. But still the Eutychian error was strong in its interest and adherents. Collisions were frequent and sanguinary; and the contests about words and definitions had no other result than to throw the settlement of the disputes at a farther distance, to inflame discord, and to perplex inquiry.

Towards the conclusion of the fifth and the commencement of the sixth century, the human understanding is seen passing into the shadow of that eclipse, from which it was not to emerge till the middle of the fifteenth century began to dissipate the mental darkness, and display the forms of truth in their real aspect and dimensions. The sixth century was surpassed by no period in the sanguinary character of its theological contentions. The Church was the area in which the passions of mankind were least under the restraint of reason or religion; and so great was the universal irritability about differences rather in phrase than doctrine, that vain disputations were perpetuated beyond all hope of settlement, till the fury of controversy referred the question to the arbitration of the sword, and a brief and deceptive pause succeeded to the horrors of assassination and massacre.

While the papal chair was occupied by Simplicius, the Eutychian heresy prevailed at Antioch, under John, the bishop of that see. His deposition on that account made way for the appointment of Stephen by a council of orthodox bishops. Stephen was murdered before the altar by a mob infuriate on the side of heresy, and his death was revenged by the slaughter of all concerned in the murder. A sort of collapse succeeded to these outrages, and Antioch had a short period of repose; but about the year 504 we find the old quarrel renewed with still greater exasperation on both sides. Both parties seemed to acquiesce in the doctrine of the two natures, but they could not agree in the form of words proper to exhibit the doctrine. Whether it was to be expressed by the single phrase "of two natures," or by the double phrase, "*of* two natures, and *in* two natures," was the point at issue; and it was a point considered of such vital importance as to justify the resort to bloodshedding. All agreed that the doctrine of the two natures, though worthy of all belief, was an ineffable mystery, inadequately comprehended by either party; yet it afforded, in the views of both parties, a sufficient ground for mutual massacres to settle a difference in shades of meaning and modes of expression. The Orontes was choked with the bodies of the slain, in deciding the question of orthodoxy between *in* and *of*, in a matter in which the only becoming position of the human understanding was that of awe, trust, and wonder.

To these specimens of the ferocity and barbarism of the times may be added the sanguinary tumults which were continually agitating the Eastern capital during the reign of the Emperor Anastasius. About the year 503 that prince, who had espoused the heresy of Eutyches, not content with compelling the bishops under his authority to anathematise the Council of Chalcedon, proceeded to expel Macedonius from the see of Constantinople. The people, rising in defence of their bishop and the orthodox faith, menaced the palace with destruction, and the Emperor himself with expulsion from his throne. The tumult was for a time suppressed by the imperial troops; but, on an attempted authoritative change in the words of the Trisagion, it broke out again, and, after a severe contest, the slaughter of the Eutychians became general, and neither rank, nor age, nor sex was spared, until the blood of many thousands was shed in the streets, squares, and churches of Constantinople, as well as in other parts of the Eastern empire. The catastrophe was rendered complete by the humiliation of the Emperor, who, after a public abdication of his power, was reduced to purchase his restoration by concessions the most abject and degrading to an insolent mob, principally composed of infuriate monks.[1]

Nor did the West come behind the East in these conflicts within the pale of the Church. The sixth century opened with a battle between the friends of the rival candidates for the papal dignity, Laurentius and Symmachus, in which the latter was wounded, and many were killed on both sides; such was the unhappy state of Christian society at this sunken and degenerate period of the human character, intellectual, social, and religious. From this urban war at Rome the new pontiff, Symmachus, hardly escaped with his life; being only saved by some of the officers of King Theodoric, who carried him to the Church of St. Peter, amidst showers of stones from the populace. The battles in the streets were frequently renewed; and no tenderness was shown by either party to sex or dignity; neither venerable men, nor even the sacred virgins, being spared by the enraged multitude.

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[1] This has been called the first of the religious wars which have been waged in the name and by the disciples of the God of Peace. See the remarks of the historian of the 'Decline and Fall' (vol. VIII. c. 47), who has observed, in his characteristic manner, that "in the fever of the times, the tense, or rather the sound of a syllable, was sufficient to disturb the peace of an empire. The Trisagion (thrice holy), Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Hosts! is supposed by the Greeks to be the identical hymn which the angels and cherubim eternally repeat before the Throne of God, and which, about the middle of the fifth century, was miraculously revealed to the Church of Constantinople. The devotion of Antioch soon added, 'who was crucified for us,' and this grateful address, either to Christ alone or to the whole Trinity, may be justified by the rules of theology, and has been gradually adopted by the Catholics of the East and West." "The Trisagion, with and without this obnoxious addition, was chanted in the cathedral by the two adverse choirs, and when their lungs were exhausted they had recourse to the more solid arguments of sticks and stones: the aggressors were punished by the Emperor and defended by the Patriarch, and the crown and mitre were staked on the event of this momentous quarrel." See the 'Breviarium' of Liberatus, c. 14-19; second and third books of 'Evagrius,' and the 'Chronicles' of Victor, Marcellinus, and Theophanes.

The question concerning the two natures, as defined at the Council of Chalcedon or elsewhere, was prudently evaded by the Henoticon of the Emperor Zeno. The purpose intended to be answered by this celebrated document was the reconcilement of the disputes by which the Church was torn and divided, on the subject of the incarnation; and, if Mr. Gibbon has been excessive in averring that "the smallest blemish has not been described by the jealous and even jaundiced eyes of our orthodox schoolmen," and that "it accurately represents the Catholic faith of the incarnation, without adopting or disclaiming the peculiar terms or tenets of the hostile sects,"[1] it cannot be denied to have been a generous and praiseworthy attempt to harmonise the dissensions of a discordant world. This formula of concord was addressed to the bishops, priests, monks, and people of Egypt and Libya. It commenced with an asseveration that nothing was so near the Emperor's heart as the tranquillity and happiness of his subjects, and then proceeded to declare, in the name of all the Churches, that no other symbol, doctrine, or definition of faith ought to be received but that of Nice, confirmed by the Fathers of Constantinople. It condemned both Nestorius and Eutyches; affirmed that the Word, in reality and not in appearance only, was made flesh of the Virgin; that the Son was consubstantial with the Father according to His divinity, and with us according to His humanity, without any mixture or confusion. And it is remarkable that it avoided all reference to the Council of Chalcedon, and the question about the natures.

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[1] Gibbon, c. 47.

The Henoticon, which was, in a great degree, if not altogether, an emanation from the mind, and probably from the pen of Acacius, was well received by Mongus, who had been installed at Alexandria, as well as by the clergy and laity throughout the African provinces. It pronounced a solemn anathema against both Nestorius and Eutyches, and against all those by whom Christ was divided, or reduced to a phantom. But it was not possible in those times, so irritably prone to verbal altercation, to frame a compendium in which the subjects in dispute, frittered into fanciful and endless subdivisions, could be compromised and reconciled. The imperial effort to conciliate multiplied the provocations to discord. Every attempt to approximate availed only to generate new elements of strife and mutual exasperation. The Eutychians, apparently discomfited by accumulated anathemas, were continually reappearing under new forms and denominations, till, out of their variegated shapes and shades of independent dogmas, a new union of a negative kind was started into being, under the name of Acephali, without head or leader.

It was the object of both Acacius and the Emperor Anastasius to secure the reception of the Henoticon by Mongus the Bishop of Alexandria, to whom the document had been transmitted immediately after its publication at Constantinople; a man of considerable abilities and general merits, although charged with a bias towards the errors of Eutyches, and, on that account, and still more for his presuming to hold opinions unsanctioned by papal infallibility, laid under the severest anathemas of the Roman Church. That the court of Constantinople should have caused so unfit a person to rule the see of Alexandria was an act not to be forgiven at Rome, and occasioned the disruption of the Eastern and Western portions of the Christian world to be put beyond the hope of reunion. But nothing so tended to make the quarrel perpetual, as the compulsory reception of the Henoticon by each bishop at his installation.

Mongus and Acacius, already under the anathemas of Simplicius, were again excommunicated by Felix III., and Acacius, as was before observed, was summoned to Rome to answer for his conduct—the Patriarch of the Eastern, before the Patriarch of the Western, metropolis. The death of Acacius did not suspend or soften the strife between these Churches. But it gave occasion, in the appointment of Fravitas to the vacant see, to a transaction whereby a light was thrown upon the fraud and mendacity which, at this early period, polluted and profaned the Christian character.

To prevent the troubles likely to ensue upon the approaching election to the see of Constantinople, an expedient was adopted, which, if an excuse can be found for it in the utilitarian Church principle which has covered so much dissimulation and falsehood, the mind of plainer sense and upright honesty will deem a far fitter subject of anathema than many of the obliquities of doctrine which infallibility has consigned to unquenchable fire. It was thought desirable to distinguish the election of Fravitas by the decisive authority of a miracle ; and for that purpose the Emperor caused a blank paper, sealed with his own seal, to be laid on the altar of one of the churches, accompanied by a written instrument, by which he and the clergy of Constantinople bound themselves to choose the person whose name should be found written on the blank paper under the seal. The access to these papers was guarded night and day by soldiers under the command of the Great Chamberlain. A fast was enjoined for forty days, during which time prayers were unceasingly offered up for the choice to be divinely directed. At the end of the forty days the paper was opened in the presence of the Emperor and the whole body of the clergy, and Fravitas being found to be the name written on the blank paper, he was forthwith proclaimed Archbishop of Constantinople, amidst loud acclamations. It so happened that Fravitas died within a year after his ordination, leaving debts due from his estate for large sums borrowed at exorbitant interest from money lenders. An inquiry into these unlooked for circumstances being set on foot, it transpired that the money had been borrowed by Fravitas to bribe the Great Chamberlain ; who was thereby induced to open the paper, and, having written upon it the name of Fravitas, to re-seal it with the imperial seal, of which he was the official keeper. On the discovery of the cheat the Great Chamberlain was put to death, and his estate confiscated for the payment of his debts. The exposure was probably of some use in guarding, even in those days, against the easy access of pious imposture, and should, in our time, throw a conservative suspicion over the legends in general of Church story, and help to frustrate the ingenuity of collusive miracles.

The history of this period is so completely engrossed with the politics and polemics of the Church, that we gather little from it illustrative of the general state of society, even in the intercourse of its ecclesiastical members. Dr. Hampden, in a note to page 23 of his 'Bampton Lectures' (first edition), very judiciously remarks, that "at the period of the fifth century, the old aristocratical classes were so reduced in numbers and influence and character, that there was no counterbalancing power against the clergy. Whoever of those classes possessed any energy or ambition, found his only sphere of action in the offices of ecclesiastical government. Prefects of provinces, military commanders, men of landed property, literary men, men of the world, some of these but newly converted, became bishops." The same able writer refers us to the case of Synesius, as an instance of the laxity which prevailed in those times respecting the qualities and restrictions necessary to be insisted upon in the character and office of a bishop. He had his doubts, as we have seen, on the article of the resurrection, and having been bred a philosopher, and accomplished in the disputations of the schools, he was nevertheless promoted to the see of Ptolemais, without being called upon to renounce his objections or doubts. Some sacrifices he did consent to make to external seemliness and propriety, in the relinquishment of his field-sports, his dogs, and his bow, of which he avows himself to have been much enamoured; but he would neither put away his wife, nor cohabit with her in secrecy, agreeably to the clerical dissimulation of the time, nor disavow his old opinions.

The writer last referred to notices, with great justness of remark, the mixture of heathenism and Christianity, of seriousness and frivolity, appearing in some of the bishops of this period, and instances Sidonius Apollinaris as a specimen of the character to which he alludes; a man of little merit, but distinguished in an age in which distinction was far from implying any eminence in virtue. Caius Sollius Sidonius Apollinaris was a native of that part of Gaul through which the Rhone passes, the ancient Gallia Narbonensis. He was a writer both in prose and poetry, if poetry could be predicated of his frigid verses, and principally indebted for his ease and safety, in those precarious and unstable times, to a series of turgid panegyrics on the Emperors Avitus, Majorian, and Anthemius; that of which Anthemius was the subject having earned for him a statue in the Forum of Rome, by which that Emperor rewarded his unsubstantial praise. He filled some of the highest offices of the state, was a patrician and son-in-law of the Emperor Avitus, and, without passing through any steps of preferment or preparation, was, in the year 471, made Bishop of Arverne, now Auvergne, of which the principal city was Clermont. Dr. Hampden observes, that he is a favourable specimen of the superior clergy of that day. And, considering he was elected to the episcopal dignity before he even belonged to the clerical order, a common case in that period of the Church, we are the less to wonder that his episcopal charge did not appear to impose on him any change in his usual habits, or induce any exterior reserve, or assumption of official gravity. His favourite games and pastimes were none of them relinquished, as appears by some of his epistles, which still exist to throw many curious lights upon the manners and practices of that obscure period, in which he may be said to have been a man of leading and distinction. His father-in-law, Avitus, having been called to the purple, left the estate which he possessed in the neighbourhood of Clermont, where, according to the flattering testimony of Sidonius, his private life had been passed in rural sports, literature, and the practice of husbandry. On the elevation of Avitus to the throne of the Roman empire, he quitted his country house, and Sidonius, as the husband of his daughter Papianilla, became the occupier. Of this villa, which Sidonius distinguished by the name of Avitacum, after his father-in-law, to whom it owed its improvements, he gives a pleasing and rather a picturesque description in an epistle to his friend Domitius; in imitation, probably, of the younger Pliny. The letter must be regarded as interesting and curious, affording, as it does, an insight into the domestic habits and arrangements prevailing at a period with which we are very imperfectly acquainted; I have, therefore, thought it might amuse the reader to bring before him some passages from it. To induce his friend to visit his retreat, he thus sets forth its claims to admiration:

"I am at Avitacum—that is the name of my farm—which, because it is the name of my wife's family, is more agreeable to me than my own family name; such is the harmony in which we live together.[1] On the western side a mountain stands out to view, not piercing the clouds, but lofty. It seems to have engendered the smaller hills about it from the fiery contents of its two craters, which cover an extent of two miles from its base. But while there is a sufficient area before the house, the sides of the hills are carried in straight declivities into the midst of the valley, quite to the verge of the dwelling-house, which has its frontage turned towards the north and the east. A spacious bath is on the southern side, lying at the base of a rocky eminence covered with a wood, so that when the trees are felled, the timber tumbles into the mouth of the furnace supplying charcoal for heating the bath, the flues of which are placed in an apartment which is of about the same area as the chambers for perfuming and anointing, except that a semicircular seat occupies a large portion of this room, through the walls of which boiling water is carried by leaden pipes. Hence a door opens into the frigidarium, or cooling apartment, and the cold bath. It has its roof conically elevated to an apex, with its four sides shelving down in an imbricated fashion. The room assigned to this purpose is an exact square, so that, leaving space enough for the services of the attendants, it may hold the number of seats required for the accommodation of the visitors coming from the hot-bath. The builder has placed opposite each other two windows, at the termination of the sloping roof, so that a view is afforded of the skilfully wrought ceiling. The cement of which the walls are made presents a smooth and shining surface. There are no paintings of figures representing impure stories, which, whatever testimony they may bear to the power of the art, are a disgrace to the artist. There are no buffooneries of dress or countenance, patched and coloured like the wardrobe of the farce-writer Philistio. There are no wrestlers and boxers with their bent and twisted limbs, whose indecent contortions the corrective rod of the masters of the sports would put a stop to in real exhibitions. What more on this head need be added? Nothing will be found represented on these walls unfit to meet an eye of purity. A few verses will arrest the casual reader, by no means of an improper character, which to have read one would not regret, but which excite no wish for a re-perusal. . . . .

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[1] This good bishop seems not to have been more disposed to part with his wife than Synesius.

"But listen while I recount to you what we possess of comfort. To this our mansion a spacious piscina, or pool, or, if you prefer a Greek term, a baptisterium or bath, is annexed, containing about twenty thousand modii. To such as have been washed in the warm bath, a triple passage is afforded hither through the partition wall by a vaulted access, not merely piles of stones but columns being interposed, such as the architects regard as the stately ornaments of an edifice. Six pipes projecting, with heads to imitate lions, pour the river which comes down from the mountain's brow, by winding channels down its sides, into the basin or pool above mentioned; which lions' heads present to those who come suddenly upon them the exact teeth of the animals, their furious aspects, and an imposing resemblance of their manes. In this place, the crowd of domestics or guests surrounding the master of the mansion, being prevented by the noise of the falling waters from making themselves heard by an ordinary exertion of voice, apply their mouths close to each other's ears, and thus the mere common chit-chat has the ridiculous appearance of being communicated as profound secrets.

"To those who are coming from the bath the apartment belonging to the mistress of the mansion presents itself, in a line with the storeroom or pantry, which is divided by a thin moveable partition from the chamber wherein the works of embroidery and the loom are carried on. Towards the east the portico looks upon the lake, which portico is supported by rounded piles, rather than with proud columns. From the vestibule, the long covered entrance lets the eye into the interior, uninterrupted by walls or partitions, which, as it looks upon nothing, although we must not call it a hypodrome,[1] has a full claim to be called a crypto-porticus, or covered way.

"This, opening at its extremity into a corridor, or open gallery, affords a refreshing coolness. When the preparation and covering of the sleeping couches are completed, then a most noisy chorus takes place among the nurses and female attendants, while I and my family proceed along the dormitory. From the covered way you pass to the winter apartment, discoloured by the smoke of the fire in the arched chimney-place often excited by the application of the bellows. But why talk of this to you, as you are not *now* invited to make one round a fire! Let us talk rather of what more appertains to you and the season. From this chamber we proceed to the dining and supping room, which opens entirely upon the lake, and from which the lake is almost seen entire. In this room there is a dining table, and a polished sideboard; to the area or floor of which apartment there is a gradual ascent by broad and easy steps; where, in the intervals of your repast, you may enjoy the prospect.

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[1] A term used by Pliny the younger in his description of his Coman villa. It signifies a sort of natural portico formed of the branches of trees and shrubs trained to meet.

"If anything is brought to you boiled in the water of this most noisy of fountains, you will see spread over the inner surface of your cups spots of snowy whiteness, and a greasy vapour obscuring their transparency as the liquor cools, which is almost immediately. The cold contents of these cups must not be swallowed at a draught by a thirsty man, though to you, who are so abstemious, such caution may not be necessary.

"Hence you may watch the fisherman launching his boat into the water, that he may spread out his nets on the surface, suspended by corks, or stretched out and fastened to fixed posts, at certain distances. It is amusing to see, on a nightly excursion on the lake, the rapacious trout ensnared by the little fish of their own kindred; what can be more fitting than that these greedy animals should be made to ensnare one another! The repast being over, the drawing room receives us, which, being the coolest, is fittest for summer, for it admits a full light without heat, having a northern aspect; a very narrow slip being interposed, where couches are placed for light and refreshing slumbers. Here, how pleasantly sounds the chirrup of the grasshoppers, in full chorus in the noontide of summer; the frogs croaking as the evening advances; the swans and geese proclaiming bedtime with their shrill notes; the crowing cocks anticipating the morning light; Philomel whispering among the shrubs the approach of the dawn, and the swallow chattering among the sparrows. To which harmony you may add the shepherd's pipe, with which the night-watching Tityruses of our mountains contend with each other, surrounded by their flocks, browsing on the green sward, with their sounding bells; all which various melodies of sound and song will bring on, by their soothing influence, a deep and refreshing sleep.

"If you take your walk towards the arbour, along the verdant lawn, you come to a public grove at no great distance, made by two large lime trees, forming one umbrageous canopy with their spreading but united branches, under whose shade, when my friend Cedicius honours me with a visit, we amuse ourselves with the ball; and this is continued till the sun, being at a greater height, confines the shade to the area between the trees, and then, too tired for the exercise of the pila, we go to the dice-board."

What is above produced is only part of a letter, in which many other descriptions are introduced of the means of enjoyment abounding in this country residence of Sidonius Apollinaris, to allure his city friend to pay him a visit. I have set it pretty largely before the reader, that he may see that, while the Church was torn and agitated by contending factions on points of doctrine, issuing, not unfrequently, in mutual massacres, there was, even among eminent ecclesiastics, a taste for indulgence and a moral laxity of deportment, which show how little is to be inferred of the devotedness of the Christian life from a fiery zeal in the maintenance of controverted tenets, or the terms and definitions in which they are involved. The above letter of Sidonius may be regarded as curious, for the insight it affords into the arrangements and habits of the social kind, existing in a period with which our historical acquaintance is extremely limited and imperfect. Of his manner of disposing of his time he gives us no intimations; but as he was a man of literature and poetry, he probably imitated the younger Pliny, as much in the economy of his time as in the distribution of his house and grounds.[1]

Another letter of Sidonius to one of his friends affords so familiar a specimen of the manners and habits of a bishop of the latter half of the fifth century of the Christian æra, that its insertion in this place cannot but be gratifying to the inquisitive reader; especially as it brings very graphically before us the life and conversation of one of the constellation of those great ecclesiastics, who are presented to us in the collection distinguished by the title of 'Bibliotheca Veterum Patrum.'

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[1] The situation of the villa of Sidonius has been always a matter of doubtful conjecture. Some have supposed it to have stood on the banks of the Lake of Chambon. And the Chateau de Varrennes, now in ruins, has by others been thought, on no improbable grounds, to cover the spot where the Avitacum was once the gay scene of the hospitalities of Sidonius and the festivities of his friends. The country round is very beautiful, and answers, in many respects, the description given by the Bishop of Auvergne of his agreeable residence.

*Sidonius to Donidius.*

"You ask why, having set out on my visit to Nemausus so long ago, I lengthen your regret by so long an absence. I will now give you my reasons for my delaying my return so long; which I shall have pleasure in relating, because I know that the things which give me pleasure give you pleasure also.

"In this most delightful country I have passed a time of the greatest enjoyment with my very kind and polite friends, Ferreolus and Apollinaris. Their farms adjoin, and their houses are so near together as to be hardly separated enough for a ride, though the distance would make a walk fatiguing. The acclivities about them are laid out in vineyards and olive-gardens. From one of these houses you look upon an extensive champaign country; from the other, upon groves and plantations. They are of a different character, but alike delightful. But why enlarge upon the sites of these villas, when I have so much to say upon the kind hospitality which reigns within them! It being our first visit, we sent forward some very expert explorers of the way, who might secure our retreat, for each of these houses was situated, not only deep in the tracks behind public embankments, but among paths which, to shorten the distance, had been rendered intricate.

"On the morning of each day there was an agreeable contention between our hosts whose kitchen should first begin to smoke with the good things to be prepared for us. Nor could the turns in this respect be easily settled upon a just scale and division. Although I was connected by the ties of propinquity with one family, those who were with me had a similar connection with the other. On Ferreolus, as a man of præfectorian rank, in addition to his claim of relationship, age and station seemed to confer the priority in exercising the rights of hospitality. Thus we are hurried from one luxurious entertainment to another.

"Hardly had we passed the threshold, when, behold, regular matches of tennis-players, within the rings or circular inclosures, and the frequent noise and rattling of the dice, with the clamours of the players! In another part were placed such an abundance of books ready for use, that you might suppose yourself in the libraries of the grammarians, or among the benches of the Roman Athenæum,[1] or the furniture of the shops of the booksellers. These means of entertainment were so disposed, that the books of a serious character were placed near the seats assigned to the matrons; while, near the benches of fathers and masters of families, such compositions were ranged as were in esteem for Latin gravity and tragic elevation; though these volumes, the productions of various writers, might all possess an equality of merit on subjects very different. Writers of like intellectual rank were mingled together—here Augustin, here Varro, here Horace, here Prudentius, caught the eye of the reader. Among whom Adamantius Origines, as interpreted by Turranius Rufinus,[2] was submitted to the inspection of the serious readers professing our faith; so that the maintainers of the different opinions on this subject might discuss the grounds on which some of our greatest divines have condemned this interpretation as a very sinister performance to be altogether avoided, though it was so exact a translation of each word and sentence, that neither Apuleius nor Cicero had more faithfully executed—the one the Phædo of Plato, and the other the Ctesiphon of Demosthenes, as a rule and model for Roman elocution. With these studies each occupied himself as he pleased, until a messenger from the chief cook reminded us that it was time to turn our attention to our corporeal part, which messenger, marking the time by the clepsydra, came very punctually at the fifth hour.[3]

"Dinner was soon despatched after the Senatorian custom, according to which a copious repast is served up in few dishes, although there was both roast and boiled. Little stories were told while we were taking our wine, which conveyed delight or instruction, as they happened to be dictated by experience or gaiety. We were decorously, elegantly, and abundantly entertained.

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[1] These were the subsellia cuneata of the Athenæum constructed in Rome, in imitation of the Greek Athenæum, which was the scene of the ludi literarii. It seems there is yet the name of "The School of the Greeks," distinguishing a small space at the foot of the Aventine hill, where tradition says St. Augustin once taught, when he exercised the rhetorical art in the Roman Athenæum. In this place, also, poems and orations were usually recited. Concerning the Roman Athenæum, see Lamprid. in Alex. Sev., p. 947; Capitol. in Pertin., p. 561; et Gordiano, p. 274; 'Histor. Aug. Script. Lugd. Bat.,' 1671; and Symmachus, lib. IX. Ep. 84.

[2] The interpretation of Origen by Rufinus seems to have been highly approved of by Sidonius; which is not to be wondered at, as the Christians of Gaul, and all the Western Churches, were much inclined to favour Rufinus; though Jerom, in commenting on Origen's work, περὶ ἀρχῶν, shows that in Rufinus's interpretation many things were interpolated and many subtracted, and he calls Rufinus's work "infamem eam interpretationem."

[3] Eleven o'clock, according to our reckoning:

"Sosia, prandendum est, quartam jam totus in horam,
Sol calet, ad quintam, flectitur umbra notam."

Auson. in Ephem.

"Rising from table, if we were at the Villa Voroangum, we retired to our apartments to get our necessaries from our packages. If we were at Prusianum, the other villa, we turned out Tonantius and his brothers, some very select young men of quality, of the same standing, to make room for us and our furniture. Having shaken off our after-dinner nap, we amused ourselves with a short ride to get an appetite for our supper.

"Neither of our hosts had their baths completed for use, though each was constructing them. But after the train of servants and attendants which I brought with me had had a little respite from their cups, their brains having been somewhat overcome with the hospitable bowls of which they had freely partaken, a sort of pit was dug in haste near a rivulet or spring, into which a quantity of hot bricks were thrown, a circular arbour being made over it by the intertexture of the boughs of willows or hazels by which the place was darkened, and air, at the same time, admitted through the interspaces, while a hot vapour was sent through the willows. Here an hour or two passed in the midst of much wit and merriment, during which we were all thrown into a most salubrious perspiration, being enveloped in the steam as it came hissing from the water. When we had been suffused with this long enough, we were plunged into the hot water, and being well cleansed and refreshed, we were afterwards braced by an abundance of cold water from the river or fountain. The river Vuardus[1] runs between the two villas, and, except when it is discoloured by the influx from the snow on the neighbouring heights, it is a transparent and gentle stream, with a pebbly bottom, nor on that account the less abounding in delicate fish.

"I might go on to give you a description of our suppers, which were sumptuous, did not my paper put that stop to my loquacity which modesty does not; of which, however, I should have been much pleased to give you an account, were I not ashamed to blur over with ink the back of my paper. Besides which, we are on the point of starting, and we please ourselves with the hope of soon seeing you again. And then we shall best bring to recollection the suppers we have had with our friends by the suppers we shall exchange with each other ; only let a complete week first elapse to bring us to our appetites after this luxurious banqueting ; for a stomach surfeited with luxurious fare is repaired by nothing so much as by stinting it for a time."

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[1] This river flows through the country of the Volcæ Arecomici into the Rhone, once famous for a Roman bridge and aqueduct, of which it is said some traces may yet be seen.

It must be owned that this intercourse between the Bishop of Auvergne and his friends has a character impressed upon it of much general urbanity and social kindness ; but that which imparts to the picture its most pleasing and interesting effect is the contrast it presents to the fierce and tumultuary character by which all public proceedings, both in the Church and in the state, were, in this period of mental darkness, distinguished and degraded. The reciprocities of civility and hospitality in ordinary intercourse, where no sentiment of piety enters into their springs and motives, are found compatible with the mischief and miseries which belong to the contentious world, and mark with blood the traces of ambitious strife, amidst conflicting dogmas, perverse disputings, and "oppositions of science falsely so called." If Sidonius appears to have carried into the intercourse of society none of the gravity of the sacred function, it does not follow that he lived above the disputes in which religious zeal allied itself to the fury of unbridled passion to stimulate and excuse its outrages. It is, however, but justice to the character of Sidonius, as it is depicted in the letters above produced, to give him the credit of being a good-natured man, a kind friend, and a good husband ; and we cannot but remark, that the same letters present an image of more ease and cheerfulness than might be expected to exist at a time when the Roman empire was falling to pieces, and successive incursions of barbarous and unknown enemies were shaking it to its foundations. In this last catastrophe of the great empire, with Goths and Vandals, Huns and Visigoths, at her gate, and trampling on her provinces, we find the Bishop of Auvergne and his friends at a rural retreat among the mountain passes, enjoying all the pleasures of the festive board. The good bishop died in the year 482.

The strange mixture of heathenism and Christianity, and of seriousness and frivolity, in many of the bishops of this period, has been strenuously remarked upon by several contemporary writers. Thus, in a letter of Sidonius himself, in which it appears that the selection of a person to fill the episcopal office for the people of Bourges had been referred to his recommendation, we find the little satisfaction he had given by the choice he had made thus explained: "Hic, qui nominatur, inquiunt, non episcopi, sed potius Abbatis, complet officium; et intercedere magis pro animabus apud cœlestem, quam pro corporibus apud terrenum judicem potest."[1] "The person named fulfils the office, not of a bishop, but rather of an abbot, and is more capable of interceding with a heavenly Judge for the souls, than with an earthly judge for the bodies, of men." According to the statements of Sulpicius Severus, general disturbance and confusion resulted from the discords of the bishops, and the hatred, partiality, fear, inconstancy, envy, faction, lust, avarice, arrogance, and sloth which prevailed among them spread depravity everywhere. The few that were capable of good counsel were overruled by the insane purposes and bad propensities of the majority; and while evil thus everywhere predominated, the people of God, and everyone distinguished by what was excellent in character, were regarded with mockery and reproach.[2] Add to all this, that the whole revenues of the dioceses were engrossed by the bishops, of which they are said, by every contemporary testimony entitled to credit, to have made very often a most selfish expenditure, while the presbyters and inferior clergy were not only subjected to their tyrannical treatment, but made to depend upon them for such arbitrary allowances out of the revenues of the Church as avarice and luxury would consent to spare.

The sixth century exhibits the Church in incessant quarrels with itself. A tumultuous, unappeasable conflict agitated its interior. It had neither fellowship nor fraternity within, nor a reasonable and right government to control and regulate it externally. The Bishops of Rome, inflated by ambition, intoxicated with power, and seconded by the corruptions of our evil nature, rode in triumph over the consciences of men, notwithstanding the embarrassments occasioned by its perpetual collisions with imperial authority, which, although vacillating, was still strong in its size and structure, and the vastness and solidity of its ruins.

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[1] Ep. ad Perpetuum.

[2] "Et nunc, cum maxime discordiis episcoporum turbari aut misceri omnia cernerentur, cunctaque per eos odio aut gratia, metu, inconstantia, invidia, factione, libidine, avaritia, arrogantia, desidia, essent depravata; postremo plures adversus paucos bene consulentes, insanis consiliis et pertinacibus studiis certabant: inter hæc plebs Dei et optimus quisque probro atque ludibrio habebatur."—Sulp. Sev. 'Hist. Sac.,' II. c. 65. Edit. Cler. 1709.

[He draws also a sad picture of the clergy of his times in c. 44: "Inebriant possessionibus; prædia excolunt; auro incubant." Fulgentius, Bishop of Ruspæ in Africa, appears to have been a bright exception.—Ed.]

In the year 526, Theodoric, the Ostrogothic King of Italy, died, after a reign, absolute in authority, but mitigated by many royal virtues; and the succeeding year was equally memorable for the death of Justin, and the succession of Justinian to the throne of the eastern division of the Roman empire.

At no period of ecclesiastical history was the tenacity of superstition, and of the evil habits engendered by our natural corruption, more manifested than about the middle of this cheerless century. The series of bishops who stood at the head of ecclesiastical affairs in Rome, from the commencement of the kingly government of Theodoric to the accession of Justinian to the throne of Constantinople, afford no signs of progression in the Church indicating its proper influence on the character and intelligence of its professing members. The periods allotted to each of these popes to play his proud and pompous part were in general very transient; but such was the steady impulse with which each was moved in the prosecution of the single absorbing purpose of personal ambition, that the entire succession seemed in a manner individualised in the "man of sin," and subordinated under the influence of one sinister and continuous effort. Symmachus, Hormisdas, John, a fourth Felix, a second Boniface, a second John, Agapetus, Sylverius, and Vigilius, filled the gloomy space of the papal dynasty from the beginning to the middle of the sixth century; the chair of the pontificate having been occupied by the last-mentioned bishop during a stormy period of seventeen years and six months, ending within ten years of the expiration of the reign of Justinian. The position of these several popes was variously affected by their doctrinal differences, which ranged them under the various sections, or rather factions, by which the Church was divided, and which involved them in incessant conflicts with the secular authorities; but under all these varying circumstances, and however brief the occupation by some of them of the papal chair, the aspirations and efforts of priestly ambition endured no pause or suspension, but, with unvarying purpose, it followed out its plan of universal domination, through failures and discomfitures, by methods fair or foul, by force or fraud, by crime or circumvention. Fluctuations of condition between the highest and the lowest extremes were the general lot of these spurious heads of the Church; but in no case were these reverses more remarkable than in the cases of John and Vigilius, in whom were exemplified a determination pressing onwards, with something like the constancy of animal instinct, towards the farthest reach of human pride and pretension. John, humbled under the Gothic sceptre of Theodoric, and compelled to repair to Constantinople to bring the Emperor to a more favourable treatment of his Arian subjects, made, nevertheless, his entry into that city with a state and pomp above the pride of earthly sovereigns. Crowds from all parts, rending the sky with their acclamations, hastened to the city to witness the solemn introduction of the great spiritual potentate. The Emperor Justin himself, mixing with the people, bowed to the ground before the Vicar of Christ and successor of St. Peter, and received at his hands, as consecrated afresh by their sacred confirmation, his imperial diadem. Yet was this John, at his return to Rome from his embassy, which had succeeded in obtaining the revocation of the edict against the Arians, cast by Theodoric into prison, from which he never came out with his life.[1]

It was in the year 536, in the pontificate of Sylverius, that Belisarius entered a conqueror into Rome, and, as a token of its reunion with the imperial crown, sent the keys of the city gates to Constantinople.

The deposition of Sylverius immediately followed this event, whose determined opposition to the Arian heresy made him the object of hatred to the Empress Theodora, its avowed patron, and opened the way for the deacon Vigilius to the throne of the pontificate, an elevation to which succeeded a train of disgraces and degradations, exhibiting the usurper over the consciences and destinies of men in a situation at once the most arrogant and most abject. Still, however, the world saw no relaxation of that undeviating, indomitable, irrepressible pursuit of power, in which pope after pope each trod in the steps of his predecessor, with a consistency in action and design that few men are able to maintain with themselves under the common variations of individual temperament. What less could be looked for of this masterpiece of Satan, than that it should reflect his character in all its consistency ? All his agents were of one type. The same master-spirit "that worketh in all the children of disobedience," having an achievement before him on the success of which the success of Antichrist and the reign of darkness were suspended, wrought, throughout these successive ministrations, an identity of mind and purpose which has marked the gigantic scheme as rightfully and royally his own.

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[1] [For which, as the Romish legends will have us to believe, upon the testimony of a holy monk who witnessed the proceeding, the soul of Theodoric was cast after death into the burning crater of the volcano of Lipari.—Ed.]

The 17th November, in the year of Christ 537, was the day on which it was determined and contrived to depose and send into exile the Pope Sylverius, on the plea and pretence of treachery, while Belisarius, in full possession of Rome as the reward of his long succession of victories, was yet exposed to the numerous hosts of the Gothic besiegers under Vitiges, their general. The treatment and fate of this unhappy pope are thus vividly described by Gibbon : "The Pope Sylverius was summoned to attend the representative of his sovereign at his head quarters in the Pincian palace. The ecclesiastics who followed their bishop were detained in the first or second apartment, and he alone was admitted into the presence of Belisarius. The conqueror of Rome and Carthage was modestly seated at the feet of Antonina, who reclined on a stately couch. The general was silent, but the voice of reproach and menace issued from the mouth of his imperious wife. Accused by credible witnesses, and the evidence of his own subscription, the successor of St. Peter was despoiled of his pontifical ornaments, clad in the mean habit of a monk, and embarked without delay for a distant exile in the East. At the Emperor's command, the clergy of Rome proceeded to the choice of a new bishop, and, after a solemn invocation of the Holy Ghost, elected the deacon Vigilius, who had purchased the papal throne by a bribe of two hundred pieces of gold. The profit, and consequently the guilt, of this simony was imputed to Belisarius ; but the hero obeyed the orders of his wife ; Antonina served the passions of the Empress ; and Theodora lavished her treasures in the vain hope of obtaining a pontiff hostile or indifferent to the Council of Chalcedon."[1]

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[1] Gibbon, c. xli. p. 239 (ed. 1790).

Sylverius was charged with the treasonable act of writing a letter inviting Vitiges into the city by the Asinarian Gate, which he promised to open for his admission. It appears plainly, from all the circumstances of this disgraceful transaction, that the accusation was fabricated by the joint artifice of the Empress Theodora, Antonina the wife of Belisarius, and Vigilius himself, whom it was now determined to thrust into the place of Sylverius —at that time the zealous asserter of the Council of Chalcedon. The constancy of Sylverius was not to be overcome; but the character of Belisarius was stained by his lending his agency to the combination against him. The deposition of Sylverius is among the facts indicative of the melancholy state of the times, in which fraud, intrigue, and faction ruled the fortunes both of Church and state. The promotion of Vigilius involved the condition of his admitting the Acephali, the most obnoxious portion of the Eutychian heretics, into communion with his see; and if in that arrangement was included a promise from the new pope of the payment above mentioned to the general of Justinian, we are compelled with regret to detract from that exalted character a considerable portion of our homage and admiration.

At Patara, the place of his first exile, Sylverius was honourably received by the bishop of that town, through whose intercession with the Emperor he was allowed to revisit Rome to have his cause re-tried, that, if absolved of the charge of treason, he might be restored to his spiritual dignity. But Antonina and his other enemies were too strong for his innocence or his right. The Roman general, in timid deference to the importunity of his wife and the authority of the Empress, delivered the unfortunate man into the hands of his hostile rival, who caused him to be conveyed to an inhospitable island in the Mediterranean Sea, where he was soon got rid of by denying him his necessary sustenance, or by some more despatchful method. Liberatus supposes him to have perished from hunger; but Procopius insinuates the more summary expedient.

Vigilius entered upon his pontifical career with an impatient performance of his promise to his patrons, by commencing at once a friendly communication with the heads of the Eutychian heresy. But, after a short correspondence with the Emperor, the versatile Pope turned completely round, and inverted the current of his anathemas by directing them against all the dissentients from the Council of Chalcedon. To proceed in a course agreeable both to the Emperor and Empress was a task of no easy accomplishment. The year of Christ 541 was distinguished by many fresh subjects of religious contention.

The old controversy concerning the tenets of Origen, revived by some monks of Palestine, was, about the middle of this century, brought under the cognisance and anathemas of the Pope's nuncio, at Constantinople, and of Mennas, the Patriarch of that see. The errors of Origen were already buried under a mountain of anathemas, and required no new sentences of condemnation to expel them from the orthodox communion. But Justinian, ever impatient to blazon his orthodoxy, and to interpose his decrees in all matters of Church controversy, at the instance of the Archbishop and nuncio issued his edict for exploding afresh these formidable doctrines, and condemning all who should maintain them. They were thus set forth:—1. That in the Trinity the Father is greater than the Son, and the Son than the Holy Ghost. 2. That the souls of men existed before their bodies; being afterwards confined to their bodies by way of punishment for the sins committed by them while in their state of separation. 3. That the soul of Christ pre-existed like other souls, and was united to the Word before the incarnation. 4. That the heavens, the sun, moon, and stars, were all animated, and endued with rational souls. 5. That, after the resurrection, all human bodies will be of a round figure. 6. That the torments of the damned will have an end; and that, as Christ has been crucified in this world to save mankind, so He is to be crucified in the next to save the devils.

Against these propositions Justinian framed and issued an argumentative and condemnatory edict, stigmatising the propounder of them as a heathenish, wicked, and blasphemous writer, and encountering them with a clear knowledge of the subjects, and with much theological learning. The edict was addressed to the Patriarch of Constantinople, and to the prelates then in that city, as well as to those of Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem, not omitting Vigilius, whom he styles the most holy and most blessed Patriarch of old Rome. Warmed with this exercise of zeal, the imperial controversialist turned his devout indignation against the numerous and powerful sect of the Monophysites, of which the Acephali bore the most distinguished part. This proceeding led, in its consequences, to the famous disputes concerning the Three Articles, or Chapters, as they are generally called, of the Council of Chalcedon, and finally gave occasion to the fifth General Council, being the second of those held at Constantinople.

The menaced attack upon the Acephali brought their cause before Justinian, with the powerful advocacy of Theodorus, the metropolitan of Cæsarea in Cappadocia, who succeeded in persuading the Emperor that all objection to the reception of the decrees of the Council of Chalcedon by the Acephali and the Eutychians would be removed if certain articles, three in number, which had been either sanctioned or allowed by that Council, were severally and distinctly condemned. The doctrines involved in these articles, afterwards better known by the designation of the Three Chapters, were considered as tainted throughout with the heresy of Nestorius. The terms upon which the Emperor was assured of the reception by all parties of the Council of Chalcedon, were the following. 1. That Theodorus of Mopsuestia, as well as his writings, should be anathematised for their Nestorian character. 2. That the writings of Theodoret of Cyrus against Cyril should be condemned; and 3. That the letter which Ibas of Edessa had written to one Maris, concerning the Council of Ephesus, should be condemned. The allowance or toleration of these writings by the Council of Chalcedon was represented as the great subject of offence which prevented the acceptance of it by the Acephali.

Theodorus of Mopsuestia, who had become bishop of that see in the year 394, had manifested a strong bias towards the doctrines of Nestorius. But the Council of Chalcedon would not condemn him as a heretic, as he had written before that doctrine was condemned by the Council of Ephesus. Theodoret of Cyrus had been induced to write against Cyril, but the Council of Chalcedon would not condemn as a heretic one who had renounced the opinions of Nestorius. Ibas, who succeeded to the see of Edessa in 430, wrote, while he was yet a presbyter, to one Maris, a Persian, perhaps a bishop, charging the Council of Ephesus with precipitance in giving sentence against Nestorius, and commending in high terms the character and opinions of Theodorus of Mopsuestia, which letter was read in the Council of Chalcedon; but as it acknowledged the one person and the two natures in Christ, his faith was pronounced to be correct, and the personal eulogies and censures contained in the same epistle were overlooked.

These were the famous Three Chapters of the Council of Chalcedon, which formed the ground of a protracted contest between the Pope and the Emperor Justinian, and between the Eastern and Western Churches. The Church of Rome and all its dependencies were zealously devoted to the Council of Chalcedon, and pertinaciously determined to assert and maintain its inviolability, while Justinian, fully persuaded of the dangerous countenance given in the articles in question to the Nestorian errors, considered it as a duty imperative upon his conscience to bring them under the severest censures of the Church. An edict was accordingly issued by him, entitled his Confession of Faith, addressed to the Catholic and Apostolic Church ; in which, after a full and explicit promulgation of the Catholic doctrines of the Trinity and the incarnation, he levelled a series of anathemas against the several heresies of Arius, Eunomius, Macedonius, Apollinaris, Nestorius, and Eutyches. The decree also contained a decided condemnation of Theodorus of Mopsuestia and his writings, the books of Theodoret against Cyril, and the above-mentioned epistle of Ibas to Maris.[1]

The bishops of the East adopted the edict, but those of the West, influenced, it was supposed, by Vigilius, who had now given his unqualified adhesion to the Council of Chalcedon, considered the condemnation of the Three Chapters as a partial disturbance of its settled authority. The contention on this subject induced the Emperor to summon Vigilius to Constantinople, with a view to compel his acquiescence in the anathemas intended to be pronounced against the obnoxious chapters, and to secure his presence at the council about to be assembled for that purpose. But the first step of Vigilius, on his arrival at the Eastern capital, was to declare his opposition to the imperial edict against the chapters; and this contention between the Pope and the Emperor, having respectively on their sides the prelates of the West and East, prepared the Church for the second Council of Constantinople, or the fifth of those distinguished by the term œcumenical, or general. The condition of Pope Vigilius, during his long detention at Constantinople, was marked by such fluctuations of opinion, and multiplied self-contradictions and tergiversations, as exhibited his character in a base and ridiculous light to the whole Christian world. Having been terrified into signing the decree of Justinian, known by the name of the "Judicatum," he was soon afterwards driven by the opposite faction to renounce that act; and the miserable man floated between resistance and submission, the Council and its questionable articles, till the termination of his vain and pusillanimous existence.

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[1] Sometimes called Justinian's Creed. It is extant in 'Harduin Concilior,' tom. III. p. 287. The decrees of the four first General Councils form the basis of it, and the condemnation of all the doctrines opposed to them is its general design and purpose. The term capitula (κεφαλαία) was used to denote the three subjects which came, rather incidentally than specifically and avowedly, within the scope and consideration of the Acts of the Council of Chalcedon. They are not called the three chapters in Justinian's edict. The decree of the Emperor pronounces the Bishop of Mopsuestia to be altogether a Nestorian and heretic: and condemns the writings of Theodoret, Bishop of Cyrus, to a qualified extent, that is, so far only as they were opposed to the twelve anathemas of Cyril (mentioned above in our account of that Father), and nearly on the same ground, the Epistle of Ibas, Bishop of Edessa, in which Cyril and the Council of Ephesus were censured. The edict of Justinian was a virtual rather than a direct impeachment of the proceedings of the Council of Chalcedon, but as its injunctions tended, in the opinion of the numerous advocates of the Council, to impair its influence and authority, they were indefatigable in its support, and resolved to tolerate no interference with it in any part or respect.

The Emperor was induced to suspend the Judicatum and his other edicts till the meeting of the intended council. But when the time arrived for that assembly to come together, Vigilius, who had, since the signing by him of the Judicatum, abjured that act of compliance, refused to be present. The council, nevertheless, met, and held its first sitting on the 5th of May, 553, with only the Eastern prelates, having in vain tried every means to obtain the attendance of the Pope, who was now transformed into a champion of the Council of Chalcedon. This second Council of Constantinople proceeded, in several sessions, all held in the month of May, 553, without the Pope, whom neither deposition nor degradation was now able to reduce to submission, fully to examine the points in dispute; till, on the 2nd of June, they pronounced a definitive sentence, solemnly declaring what was the Catholic faith in accordance with the decrees of the four General Councils, and denouncing distinctly the contents of the said Three Chapters of the Council of Chalcedon. The Pope's judgment in favour of the same was condemned and reversed, and all who would not anathematise what had been proclaimed by him for the belief and adoption of the Catholic Church were themselves unsparingly cursed.

Thus were these notable Three Chapters of the Council of Chalcedon solemnly and authoritatively condemned, in the absence of the vacillating Pope, who refused to attend or to affix his signature to the decrees of the assembly. His resolution, however, gave way under an imperial sentence of banishment to the island of Proconnesus, as a condemned and deposed heretic. A letter to the Patriarch of Constantinople soon informed that prelate of the sudden change which his opinions had undergone. But his restoration to liberty and the papal dignity was conceded only to an unqualified reversal of his own infallible decision, so lately pronounced in favour of the Three Chapters; and thus for the fourth time the pitiable pontiff stultified and renounced his own infallible judgment. On these humiliating terms Vigilius was permitted to resume the proud title which had been so disgraced in his hands; and, having satisfied the Emperor by an abject and entire submission, liberty was given to him to return to Rome, after an absence of seven years. To revisit the seat of his authority was his earnest desire; but his expectation was frustrated by an illness which overtook him at Syracuse, on his way to Italy, and put an end to his life and his troubles, after a precarious and unworthy use of power for a period of seventeen years and some months. His body was carried to Rome, where it was interred in the church of St. Marcellus, and where his memory has been sainted and unsainted, according to the varying caprice of that apostate communion.

The fervour of these controversies concerning the doctrines of Origen and the decrees of the Council of Chalcedon was beginning to cool, when a new subject of polemical discussion arose, in which Justinian embarked with his usual precipitance. It was about the year 520 that Julian, an Eutychian bishop of Halicarnassus, advanced an opinion that the body of our Saviour was always incapable of corruption. His theory supposed that, by virtue of the Divine nature, the body to which it was united was, from the moment of the incarnation, changed in its constitution, and exalted above corruption. The useless and presumptuous question shook the community of the Monophysites into many breaches and subdivisions, and the disputes consequent upon it were endlessly multiplied. The new hypothesis was strenuously opposed by Severus of Antioch, who maintained that the body of Christ, before His resurrection, was subject to all the changes to which human bodies are liable. As from the opinion of the incorruptibility of the body of the Saviour inferences might be drawn of its impassibility, and, in the progress of error, of its unreality, the asserters of the doctrine of Julian were variously denominated Aphthartodocetæ, Phantasiastæ, or designated generally Manicheans. Those who sided with Severus were also stigmatised by names compounded in a similar way, as Phthartolatræ and Creaticolæ. Justinian, unfortunately for the credit of his consistency, embraced the opinion of those who maintained the incorruptibility, while those of inferior note took a middle course, from which arose a multitude of mixed and modified theories, all of which have happily long ceased to agitate the Church. Other notions, involving the question of Christ's omniscience in the flesh, were the progeny of these subtle themes and vain disputations, which clouded the thoughts and imaginations of men at this period of fruitless labour and misguided activity, and filled the religious atmosphere with mist and vapour.

I pass by the doctrines of those who denied the numerical unity of the Godhead, and of those who attributed a common nature, like that which belongs to a species, to the three ineffable Persons, and all the results and ramifications of these idle speculations. They tend decisively to illustrate the safety and solidity of the ground assumed by Justinian in his celebrated edict—a simple and steady adherence to the doctrines and decrees of the first four General Councils. It had been well if the princely theologian could have wisely maintained his stand in that peaceful position; but, unhappily, an ill-judged intermeddling in disputes concerning the corruptibility or incorruptibility of the body of Christ, and whether it required nourishment like other bodies, and whether our Lord suffered hunger and thirst and required sleep like others, or only ate and drank and slept by choice to show His real humanity—held him in restless controversy till his death, which took place on the 14th of November, 565, in the eighty-third year of his age, after a reign of thirty-eight years, seven months, and thirteen days.

The part which Justinian took in the religious controversies of his time was not unfrequently such as tended rather to provoke dispute than to direct inquiry; rather to dissipate the substance of religion by a scientific and intricate theology, than to make it available as the regulator of practice, or the basis of law and government. He appears to have been a man of great vanity, covetous of fame in provinces alien to his proper vocation, and, upon the whole, more anxious to attract applause for his personal attainments, than to make his wisdom felt in the prosperity of his subjects. In religion he was a bigot, if bigotry consists in the arbitrary and obtrusive maintenance of opinions above our understanding to establish or elucidate, without diffidence of ourselves or condescension to others; and to the charge of bigotry must be added that of persecution, if persecution consists, under various forms and degrees, in forcing upon others acquiescence in what their judgment disclaims, by menace or coercion. Theology was the field on which Justinian moved with the worst effect; but it was that on which it gratified him most to expatiate.

The theology of Justinian may have been tainted with bigotry, credulity, and self-adulation; but his philanthropy and careful industry have given to the world one of the grandest accumulations of the products of human thought and experience with which the repertory of social and political wisdom has been enriched. His code comprised the collective wisdom of the various legislative acts, from the time of Hadrian to the date of its completion, being based on the *Perpetual Edict*, whereby the desultory congeries of Roman law was reduced to order by the sanction of that Sovereign and his Senate. What, or whether any, personal agency in the achievement of this great work is to be ascribed to Justinian himself, remains a matter of uncertainty; but it is certain that to his patronage, and, it may be reasonably supposed, to his counsel and suggestions, the undertaking owed, in a great measure, its accomplishment and success. The code occupied, in its preparation and completion, a period of about fourteen months, having been commenced in February, 528, and concluded in the month of April, 529. The Digest or Pandects, a more arduous and elaborate work, succeeded, in which a body of jurisprudence was sought to be constructed out of the mass of opinions, responses, and decisions of the Roman lawyers, from the date of the settlement completed under the auspices of the Emperor Hadrian, who was the first of the Roman emperors who exercised, directly and undisguisedly, the plenitude of legislative power. Such were the materials of the Pandects, or general Digest; which, having collected and arranged what seemed worthy of preservation from the works of the civilians and jurists of imperial Rome, left to the ruin and oblivion of time the simple and austere jurisprudence of Cato, Sulpicius, and the Scævolas. However consecrated by the praise of Cicero, they were unsuited to the times in which Tribonian carried into execution his imperial master's juridical reforms.

Nor, in this incidental mention of the testimonies of history to the character and works of Justinian, may we omit the elementary treatise comprising the general principles of the entire system, published by the Emperor's direction, in four books, and distinguished by the name of the Institutes.[1]

Such were the theological and such the judicial merits of the ruler of eastern and western Rome in this interval of its slow and ponderous decline. As a man and a sovereign, and viewed with reference to the great part he had to sustain among his fellow beings, we must acknowledge that his tenacious grasp of the sceptre of his vacillating empire for so long a period, and the consolidation of his wide-spread and disjointed dominions by the prowess and prudence of the great generals whom his judgment had selected, in a time of universal degeneracy, are facts which throw such a degree of lustre round his memory as almost to compel our homage. On a nearer view these claims become more equivocal. The depravity of his choice in the adoption of a person to share his throne so utterly unworthy as the Empress Theodora, whose life had been the scandal of her sex, and to whose tyranny and caprice the little that was good or great among the characters of that day was meanly sacrificed, were proofs of vice and weakness in the mind of Justinian which remain so after every allowance is made for false impressions, the surprise of passion, and the seductions of flattery. If the examples of the great men of antiquity are cited in extenuation of this disgraceful portion of Justinian's career, it must be remembered that neither Alexander, nor Cæsar, nor Pericles, nor Marcus Antoninus, were followers of that faith of which Justinian was a defender, a professor, and a teacher.

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[1] The Institutes, with the Digest, were made one body of jurisprudence by the order of the Emperor, and sent under the imperial authority to all the Courts of judicature, and to the Schools where the study of law was cultivated. It was promulgated as the only system of jurisprudence to be in practical use and application, and to take place of all others. But a new edition of the code revised and corrected, under the title of 'Codex Repetitæ Prælectionis,' was published in 534, by which the first code was superseded, and has been entirely lost, except where it makes part of the second code. The Edicts, which were published after the new edition of the Code, were formed into one body, and exhibited under the name of Novellæ, written originally in Greek, but in the last year of Justinian's reign translated into Latin, with such exactness as to be distinguished by the name of 'Volumen Authenticum.' Thus, what is properly designated the 'Corpus Juris Civilis' is composed of the Pandects, the Institutes, the Codex Repetitæ Prælectionis, and the Novells. The text of the Pandects, which by time and neglect had been almost wholly lost, was, in the year 1137, accidentally discovered in a perfect state at Amalfi, a town in Italy, near Salerno. It was carried first to Pisa, and afterwards to Florence, and there, in a costly binding, deposited in a chest. Numerous editions have been formed from this copy, which some have very questionably supposed to have been the original autograph. By this important discovery the study of the civil law was revived. It became a special object of instruction and study in the foreign universities and academies, and was made the basis, in many states, of their civil institutions.

After all, it is only with hesitating praise that posterity can celebrate the memory of Justinian. The commencement of his reign was auspicated, after the oriental fashion, by clearing the ground of all competition and counter-claims. Many of the domestics of the palace, together with Vitalian, the leader of the Barbarian forces, were carried off by private assassination or public execution. His throne vibrated between the opposite factions of the circus, distinguished by their green or blue colours, and was for some time dependent for its stability upon the successful violence of a party whose merits lay wholly in its livery of blue, and its triumphs in the hippodrome. The voice of the senate and the people was purchased by spectacular pomp, and a lavish expenditure in gifts and largesses; the benedictions of the clergy were secured by a rigid maintenance of their privileges and pretensions, and an inquisitorial interference with the exercise of private judgment.

To say that Justinian was deficient in practical and worldly wisdom, would be to withhold from him the meed to which the policy and prosperity of his long reign may seem to entitle him; but his wisdom and his policy lay in the selection of men of able heads and strong hands for civil and military employments; for suggesting, as well as executing, his devices and undertakings; which services, however, he often wanted courage to protect, and sensibility to reward. In instances not a few, neither principle nor prudence appears to have guided his choice of friends or instruments. Procopius, in his secret or anecdotal history, has presented both him and his Empress under aspects detestably odious,[1] but it must be owned that the inconsistencies of that historian disclose the meanness of the motives often at the bottom both of his praises and reproaches, giving to his facts a vague and doubtful colouring, and greatly detracting from the worth and importance of his remarks.

Although the reign of Justinian was pregnant with events of no little influence on the history of the world, and which were chiefly set on foot by him or fostered by his power, yet his own character seemed not to be rendered more conspicuous by them, or even to rise to their level. His purple was soiled by his abject sympathy with the turbulent commotions of his factious subjects, which he had neither the judgment to anticipate, nor the fortitude to repress. His conduct wavered where it became him to control or overrule. Alternating between power and fear, he held a vacillating sceptre, sometimes the dread and sometimes the scorn of his people. In the business of empire he was early and late; a man of diligence, and awake to his duties and responsibilities, but wanting in what was great in grandeur, or wise in economy; at once profuse and grasping, applauding virtue and patronising vice; elevating a prostitute to his throne, and degrading the hero by whom that throne was upheld. These were the deficiencies and faults by which his virtues, some specious and some solid, were counterbalanced; and to these must be added a persecuting spirit, which invalidated truth in his hands, made his orthodoxy odious, and dyed the plains of Samaria with the sanguinary traces of his exterminating sword.[2]

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[1] Procopius, the secretary of Belisarius, whose history is comprised in eight books, devotes two of them to the Persic war, two to the Vandalic war, and three to the Gothic. The eighth book, of a miscellaneous and supplemental character, brings the narrative down to the year 553. The work is, on the whole, very valuable, as presenting a picture of times involved in much obscurity, and preserving to us the fading memorials of an empire upheld rather by its name, and the prejudices established by its former fortunes, than by any remaining energies. The 'Anecdota,' or secret history, composed by the same author, exhibits the characters of the ex-Emperor Justinian and the Empress Theodora, with all the reproach and ignominy with which the bitterest feelings of resentment could surround them; and from the pencil of that historian have proceeded those disgusting descriptions of lustful abandonment from which every imagination not utterly depraved must turn away, as feeling nature and humanity dishonoured and defiled by them; which Mr. Gibbon, indulging his usual privilege of impure allusion and intimation, has covered with the transparent veil of a learned language.

[2] No emperor that went before him was his equal in the magnificence of his structures. He built many churches;

From the death of Vigilius, who departed about ten years before the close of the reign of Justinian, to the first Gregory, usually called Gregory the Great, being the most celebrated and able of the pretenders to St. Peter's chair, an interval of thirty-five years in the annals of the pontificate was filled by four popes in succession, with little to entitle them to special notice. To remit nothing of what had been claimed and asserted by the arrogance of their predecessors, and to let no occasion of gaining a step in advance pass unimproved, was the inviolable rule of each, varied only by the peculiarities of genius and habit. Vigilius was followed by Pelagius, who had been in the service of Sylverius, as his nuncio at Constantinople; but had sacrificed his interests to the more successful ambition of Vigilius. The papal dignity was held by Pelagius with no very vigorous hand. Being called upon by Childebert, King of the Franks, to give an account of his faith, which was brought into question by his avowed adherence to the fifth General Council, he yielded at once to the demand, and sent, with great readiness, a full confession of his creed, declaring his entire acceptance of all the doctrines of the Council of Chalcedon, which, he maintained, were in no article contradicted or opposed by the fifth Council. But the favour of the Church was not on the side of that Council, and the papal ascendency lost so much in his hands by this unpopular bias, that it seemed to be well for its interests that his possession of the dignity was limited to a short period. He expired in the month of March, 560. Pelagius was succeeded by John III., who presided over the Church of Rome, from his ordination to the year of Christ 573, being a period of thirteen years wanting a few days. During this pontificate, his eastern rival, Eutychius, the Patriarch of Constantinople, was not only deposed but imprisoned by Justinian, for maintaining the doctrine of the corruptibility of our Lord's body before His resurrection. The Patriarch was summoned to appear before a council assem-

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but the great monument of his taste for the magnificent was the edifice called Sancta Sophia, begun by Constantine the Great, completed by Constantius his son, and burned to the ground by an accidental fire in 532; in which year the Emperor Justinian laid the foundation of a new church of a far more splendid character, which was finished and dedicated on the 28th of December, 537; when, with an enthusiastic feeling of self-gratulation, the imperial architect exclaimed, *νενίκηκα σε, Σολομων*, "I have outdone thee, Solomon!" See Cedren. 'Hist. Compend. ad Ann. 532.'

bled in the capital, to answer the charges against him. He was contumacious, and, refusing to obey the summons, was tried in his absence, condemned, and sent in exile to an island in the Propontis. From thence being conveyed to Amasia, he was confined in a monastery, where he had been educated, and of which he became afterwards the abbot. His deposition made way for the promotion of Johannes Scholasticus, who had zealously maintained the doctrine of the incorruptibility. Nevertheless on the death of Scholasticus, which occurred in the year 577, he was recalled to Constantinople by the successor of Justinian, and replaced in the see of that city.

On the demise of Justinian the throne was filled by his nephew Justin the younger, who signalised his short reign of three years by an edict setting forth the unquestioned doctrines of the orthodox faith, but declaring all men throughout his dominions at liberty to hold and declare their opinions on the much agitated question of the corruptibility or incorruptibility of the Saviour's body, the Three Chapters, and all other points not essentially affecting the pure faith of the Gospel, without molestation. This edict appears to have been partially successful in procuring, at least to the Churches of the East, a short respite from discord and mutual violence. Justin the younger died in the month of October, 578, and was succeeded on the throne by Tiberius, a native of Thrace; who, like his predecessor, finished his course in the short period of little more than three years, during which he sustained an honourable name, and displayed the pattern of a virtuous prince.

If some salutary effects were produced by the moderating influence of the early conduct of Justin the younger, neither those promising beginnings, nor the eminently virtuous though brief part performed by Tiberius amidst the moral and religious disorders which at that time deformed the face of society, if society it could be called, was able to stop the course in which both sacred and secular institutions were accomplishing their destiny, and hastening towards the extremity of total abuse and corruption. Justin was unfurnished with moral energy to persevere in the course on which he seemed to be entering; and being further incapacitated by disease and domestic troubles, he soon appeared to be unequal to the exigencies of his tottering empire.[1] Of this he gave lamentable evidence by his supercession and recall of Narses, and the appointment of Longinus to the supreme military command in his stead. That lofty spirit, which, in the brilliant days of Rome, kept the flame of patriotic self-devotion still burning bright in the bosom of unrequited valour, was no more. The eunuch Narses had, with extraordinary bravery and prudence, carried on to their consummation the victories of Belisarius in Italy. The ungrateful treatment which he now experienced unnerved his patriotism, and made him the instrument of dissolving the integrity of the empire, so near its completion. In a moment of resentment and irritation, the exasperated general, to whose sense of injury some insult had been added, invited the Lombards, then in the full career of their barbarous glory, to enter the barriers of devoted Italy, on whose fair and fruitful fields their eyes had long impatiently feasted. Narses had soon his revenge accomplished by the rapid disseverance of what, under his own hand, had been so recently recovered and reunited. The whole country was abandoned to the ravages of a merciless force, which had now neither fear nor compunction to stay or mitigate its lust of conquest. By this signal event, so marked in history by its political and statistical consequences, Rome lost altogether the savour of her great name. She could no longer borrow from prejudice, or habitual homage, what had now substantially perished from her grasp. The miseries which followed these victories of the Lombards, the murders, massacres and assassinations which flowed in rapid succession, beginning with Alboin, the first bloody adventurer, till Italy was dismembered into petty states, each vying with the other in the sanguinary character of its rule, might well justify the supplications of these unhappy provinces to be re-seized by their former masters, and to be brought again under their imperial yoke. But it was no longer in hands capable of replacing it upon their necks. The sovereignty of Constantinople, with neither Belisarius or Narses to make it felt or formidable, was itself struggling for existence under a barbarian pressure from without; while the seeds of internal dissolution were fomented in the capital by a state of things utterly incompatible with efficient government. The incongruous union of an absolute form of sovereign sway with a popular licentiousness exploding perpetually in physical outbreaks, produced the natural consequences of tumult, vibration and collision throughout all that belonged to the Roman name. Justin, a weak and inglorious prince, was carried along by the current of events; and Tiberius, his immediate successor, with a capacity for government which, in other times, might have gained him a great name and embalmed his memory among the honourable of the earth, was hardly long enough in power for his qualities to receive their due exercise and expansion, finishing his course in the short period of three years. His virtues, glittering amidst the vices of his effeminate court, the brutal riots of the hippodrome, and the corruptions of his degenerate people, seemed designed to show, by the beacon light of a living model, how far from the haven of truth and reason men had wandered at the close of the sixth century, under the miserable guidance of superstition and sensuality. He left no issue; but to crown the gracious acts of his short reign, he named the worthiest successor on whom, in his limited range of choice, the appointment could have fallen. Maurice had held a distinguished command in the Persian war; and being his son-in-law, was most ostensible to the precarious preferment. He held the sceptre of the Roman world for more than twenty years, having assumed it at the mature age of forty-three, with a character, if we believe his historian Evagrius, above censure. His reign commenced in the year 582, and terminated in 602, during which time his Persian campaigns left him neither time nor means to attempt the deliverance of his Italian subjects from the gripe and oppression of the Lombards.

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[1] One act of this prince, if what Evagrius records of him be received upon his testimony, is quite enough to stamp an indelible stain on his memory. Justinian's two nephews, each bearing the same name of Justin, were equally entitled to the succession. They agreed that he whom the dying Emperor should judge the less worthy of the throne should submit to the decision, on terms of his being considered and treated as the second person in the empire. The preference was given to him who afterwards reigned, and the cousin faithfully adhered to his engagement; but he was a brave and virtuous man, and probably on that account considered as dangerous, and viewed with jealousy. He was amused with protestations of kindness, and inhumanly murdered in his bed.—Evagr' lib. v. c. 2.

The narrators of these perplexed and barbarous times are so little characterised by the gravity which one would fain associate with the dignity of the historian's province, and every event comes down to us with so much colouring or disguise, under the influence of prejudice, superstition, or faction, that one cannot descend into their details without great hesitation and distrust. The discredit thrown upon the name and glory of Narses, as the betrayer of his country, by his express invitation of Alboin and his Lombards to invade and overwhelm the cities and plains of Italy, may have had its foundation in malice and falsehood; but the fact is clear and above question, that the imprudent and ungrateful recall of that extraordinary man and illustrious general from his high station as military commander and governor in the provinces which had been recovered by his victories and his virtues, opened a high road to the fatal incursions of barbarians, more savage than any which had yet abandoned their regions of frost and sterility upon the same remorseless errand. Except the Exarchate of Ravenna, in which the ancient sovereignty still maintained its form and lineaments, with an extent of dominion very variable and precarious, the residue of Northern Italy was long either the arena of incessant combats, or a miserable example of the wretchedness that issues from the union of barbarity and luxury inflaming each other, and equally above restraint or correction.

During the reigns of Justin II., Tiberius, and Maurice, all applications from their Italian subjects to either of those emperors were equally fruitless. They had business enough on their hands with the barbarous hordes surrounding and threatening the capital, and the prosecution of an exhausting war with the dynasties of Persia absorbed all their energies, and wearied their best efforts. The cry of Rome could no more be attended to than the complaints which were daily poured into Constantinople from the other Italian states; and the old capital of the world was suffered to sink despondingly to its lowest stage of debility and depression. In the mean time, the affairs of the Emperor Maurice were approaching their melancholy consummation. The state of the Roman armies had greatly degenerated. The vacant places of Belisarius and Narses could be supplied out of no sources or materials which were left to the empire. All the institutions in which any trace remained of the Roman name and character, as well military as civil, were mouldering and crumbling into ruin. Maurice had neither an arm nor counsel to reanimate the carcase, or arrest the progress of its decomposition. He may have been governed, in the main, by the principles of Tiberius; he may have been just, manly, and frugal; but he was deficient in that flexibility and accommodation of management which the capricious and unsteady temper of the people required, and which a vigilant observance of the crisis in which he was placed would have suggested to a more capacious and practised intelligence. He entered upon a system of reform in the discipline and expenses of the army, without sufficiently weighing the consequences. He carried his economy to the extent of refusing to ransom twelve thousand prisoners in the hands of the Chagan of the Avars, thereby leaving them to be got rid of by a merciless massacre. To balance between the blue and green factions of Constantinople was always a perplexing and hazardous necessity. Maurice was on the side of equal justice; but on a stormy sea, amidst shoals and quicksands, what vessel can ride in a steady and straight course! and yet to note and avoid the perils below the surface was not the talent, or tact, or within the ken and foresight of this respectable prince, worthy himself of living in the best times, but with his lot cast in the worst. His successes in his Persian wars, which had conferred on him the splendid privilege of seating the grandson of Nushirvan on the throne of his ancestors, had probably elated the mind of Maurice above a due and moderate estimation of his safety, his abilities, and his resources. The indignation with which he received the murmurs of his troops, and some ill-timed severities used at this critical juncture, inflamed the whole army into sudden revolt. Phocas, holding only the rank of a centurion, was the first to raise the standard of rebellion. This was enough, at such a moment, to raise the shout which can at once elevate the least qualified to the highest dignity, and put the sceptre in the hand most certain to abuse it. Under the command of Phocas, with menaces and acclamations, the troops marched in haste to the suburb of Constantinople. The sequel of this unhappy tale is short and disgusting. After a rest of three days before the walls of the city, the army entered the gates, with Phocas at its head, in a chariot drawn by milk-white steeds, which bore him in his purple investiture to the imperial palace, where, enthroned in state, the new sovereign contemplated the contests of the hippodrome.

Maurice attempted to escape, but was compelled, by contrary winds, to land a few miles from Chalcedon. The miserable fugitive was thus intercepted in his flight to the Persian monarch, to whom he had dispatched Theodosius, his eldest son, to solicit the protection which was due from his gratitude. Meanwhile the factions of green and blue were at their usual work of mutual violence. The green were the favourites of Phocas, and the exasperated blues reminded him that Maurice was yet alive. This was enough. The fate of the fallen Emperor was at once determined. He was found in the sanctuary of a church, and dragged, with his five sons, to execution. The sons were first murdered in succession before the eyes of the father, whose only words are said to have been: "Thou art just, O Lord, and Thy judgments are righteous." The father's turn then came; and with these words on his lips his unparalleled sufferings were terminated by the blow of the executioner. But neither was this the last scene of the tragedy. Theodosius the son was overtaken in his flight, and beheaded at Nice. Still the widow of Maurice, and her three daughters, were living. It cannot be said, in aggravation of the deed by which Phocas crowned his multifarious work of blood and horror, that Constantina settled in tranquil submission to the will of the tyrant. From the house wherein they were at first confined the Empress escaped, and fled to the sanctuary of St. Sophia; and here she hoped, by her importunities and tears, to produce a rising in her favour among a people before whom the usurper had made such a display of his tyranny and cruelty. She was taken from thence and shut up in a monastery. Here she was accused of again conspiring against the assassin of her husband; and the diabolical fury of the man could be satiated with nothing less than the execution of both the mother and daughters. A matron, says the historian of the Decline and Fall, who commanded the respect and pity of mankind, the daughter, wife, and mother of emperors, was tortured like the vilest malefactor, to force a confession of her designs and associates. With her three innocent daughters, the Empress Constantina was beheaded at Chalcedon, on the same ground which had been stained with the blood of her husband and five sons. With the reign of Phocas, which began in the November of 602, commenced an æra the most important in its consequences on the moral condition of man, which had occurred since Christianity became the religion of the state.

Secular Rome was now in a falling and crumbling condition; but ecclesiastical Rome, under the mild auspices of Gregory, was proceeding circumspectly and steadily on to that perfection of the papal aggrandisement, which never failed to be the unceasing passion and purpose of soul of every successive occupant of the so-called Peter's chair, under all the varying shades of personal temperament and private character. The pontificate of Gregory commenced on the 12th of February, 590, and ended with his life on March 12th, 604, being a period of thirteen years, six months, and a few days. His active virtues were in continued exercise in alleviating the distresses of his country, in solacing affliction, and succouring want; especially in averting from the Roman people the ruin with which they were threatened, on every side, by the ruthless violence of the Lombards. Mr. Gibbon says that the pontificate of Gregory the Great was one of the most edifying periods of the history of the Church. Why it should be so especially edifying he leaves his readers to make out for themselves. It may be that to the historian's mind the conduct of the great prelate exhibited a pattern of all that was great and good. Yet how a character "suited to the temper of the times," of times so evil, rather than corrective of its manners and practices, could be edifying, it is not very easy to conceive; or how the "mixture of simplicity and cunning, pride and humility," however it might reflect or represent the form and pressure of the times, could show, to an age so sunk in error, the true and living way which conducts to the source of real edification.[1] The union of simplicity with cunning is an impossibility. Where there is cunning in practice and principle there can be no simplicity. It may be assumed, and the semblance of it used as an instrument of refined cunning; but the combination of the two qualities, each in its own true nature, so as to mix in essence and operation, is not within the compass of moral chemistry to effect. If cunning had the ascendant in the mind of Gregory, his simplicity could be nothing but a dextrous engine of imposition and deceit.

Gibbon, after mixing together in the mind and character of Gregory the jarring ingredients of simplicity and cunning, pride and humility, sense and superstition, atones for the parsimonious praise implied by expressions of such qualifying and neutralising effect, by doing ample justice to the wisdom and virtue of his conduct in secular as well as ecclesiastical affairs, of which his integrity, his charity, his knowledge, and the general weight of his character gave him an undisputed control and management.

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[1] "His virtues, and even his faults, a singular mixture of simplicity and cunning, of pride and humility, of sense and superstition, were happily suited to his station, and the temper of the times."—Gibbon, vol. VIII. c. 45, p. 165.

Milner, in his history of the Church, is much less reserved in his praise of this great prelate. He lays himself out with great zeal, but with some froth and feeble eulogy, in perhaps too partial a review of the Christian graces and eminent virtues of the great Bishop. Truly he was a very considerable person; as a senator of Rome, and appointed governor of the city, he was greatly distinguished by his energy, his fidelity, and his prudence. After assuming the monastic habit, his life continued to vibrate between secular cares, and the sacred abstractions of his retirement. His elevation to the supreme ecclesiastical authority was attended with all those demonstrations of reluctance to accept the proffered dignity which have given the charm of self-renunciation to so many coy aspirants after unlimited authority. It is praise, however, of a much less equivocal character, that, during the many calamities with which Rome was visited under the pontificate of Gregory—inundations, pestilence, famine, and, added to all these, the sword and devastations of the Lombards—the pious prelate was unceasing in his efforts to mitigate suffering, distribute assistance, and inspire fortitude. Nor did he remit his exertions, under the severest pressure of public and private misfortune, and his peculiar bodily infirmities which were frequent and distressing, in discharging all his ministerial duties and sacred offices, while order, justice, and charity pervaded all his secular functions, and all his regulations of civil economy. It was also a feature worthy of high commendation in his character, that anything like persecution for religious dissentience was always, in teaching and practice, discouraged and discountenanced. For offences against moral decency he felt himself justified in the exercise of great severity. The regulation of the ceremonies and ordinances of Church service was his great and seasonable care; and the litanies prepared and appointed by him still attest his powers of thoughtful expression, and the devotional spirit of his supplications to the throne of Omnipotence. They were designed principally as a shield against the perpetual assaults of the Lombards; and being ordered to be repeated every fourth and sixth day of the week, were probably the origin of the use of the litany in our own Church on every Wednesday and Friday.

On the great doctrine of justification by faith his ideas appear to have been somewhat clouded, and in no small degree inaccurate. His disapprobation of the zeal of Serenus, Bishop of Marseilles, in breaking the images which had been set up in his church, and had begun to attract something too like an idolatrous culture, was not so expressed as to manifest a sufficient abhorrence of such tendencies. He rebuked Serenus for not indulging his people in the use of images by way of instruction only in the great facts of ecclesiastical history, forgetting the tacit progress of harmless beginnings in an ill direction, the quiet advances of ambiguous practice, and the danger of all parley and compromise with sin. With much ignorance of human frailty he talks of images as the books of illiterate people.

Among the benefits conferred by Gregory on his Church and his times was the distribution of parishes, and the several duties of the pastoral office. The fasts and festivals, and the entire model of the Roman Liturgy, were settled by his authority; nor were the vestments of the priests and deacons, or even the order of processions, below the cares with which he charged himself, that all things might be done in proper succession, and with becoming order and decency. Till his broken constitution forbade all such exertions, he gave his active assistance to the service of the mass; and the solemn and melting cadence of the Gregorian chant still vibrates on the ear and awakens the sympathies of elevated devotion. In his writings, though there is much piety and pathos, there is no small intermixture of superstitious credulity; and whether we impute it to extravagance of thought, or policy of contrivance, certain it was that Gregory was content to rest the demonstration and extension of Christianity less on the word and testimony of revelation than on the stories in which his age abounded of miraculous appearances, apparitions, resurrections from the dead, and the potent machinery of signs and wonders, by which ignorance was awed into stupid amazement, and the right of inquiry suppressed and subdued.

It was about one hundred and fifty years after the arrival of the Saxons on our shores, that Gregory commissioned Augustin, a monk of his own monastery of St. Andrew, to carry Christianity into Britain. The story of the handsome youths exposed to sale, and the deep sighs of the prelate on reflecting that the prince of darkness was to possess countenances so luminous, and that so fair a front should carry minds so destitute of eternal grace, will not attract the sympathies of such as allot no extraordinary reverence to the testimonies of those days of credulity and unscrupulous invention. The expedition was not embarked in by the fainthearted monk until after many delays and misgivings, and with an inferiority of zeal that sinks him very far below the standard of our modern missionaries, who pass on to their work over the perilous seas to shores frowning upon them with their torrid influences, or their menacing ridges of eternal frost, and this with a chivalry of heart that, in the cause of God and the soul, knows neither fear nor reproach. Augustin, thus authorised and patronised, made his pious aggression upon this country, with his suite of forty monks, and soon found favour at the court of Ethelbert, the King of Kent, whom he converted to the faith, seconded by Bertha, already a pious convert, the only daughter of Caribert, King of Paris. The court resided at the city of Canterbury, and Queen Bertha had a chapel there, and there the monk first planted the standard of the Gospel, amidst the shining testimonies of miracles, which appeared always at his command; and such was the success of his apostolic labours, that ten thousand English baptisms ushered in the day of our Lord's nativity. But miracles were not enough to announce the coming of this ambassador of the faith. "He presently," says Bishop Bale, "introduced altars, vestments, images, masses, chalices, crosses, candelabra, censers, banners, sacred vessels (as they call them), lustral waters, and the books of Romish ceremonies, which Gregory had sent to him with the benediction of St. Peter. For their zeal was principally spent upon the oblations of the masses, episcopal seats, processions, pageants, and tithes. Having convened, therefore, in the first instance, a synod, he everywhere directed the Romish customs to be observed in the churches. Christianity was existing in these lands previously, but not so as to suit their purpose, inasmuch as it was without masses and distinctions of meats and days. The Britons were then observing the bare Gospel. And when they were unwilling to subscribe to the decrees and the precepts of so holy an apostle, there brake out at length, at his incitement, a sanguinary warfare, in which twelve hundred of their faithful ministers, obedient to their God, who had come together for the purpose of prayer, were put to the sword, and crowned with holy martyrdom."[1]

Honours fell thick upon the head of this new representative of the Pope. How could it be otherwise, where claims were so established! He is said to have left the indelible print of his foot on the stone which received his first step on his landing; to have caused a fountain to issue from the earth to supply him with the means of baptizing; to have brought back to life the corpse of an excommunicated man, to confess his refusal of the due payment of tithes, and then that of the priest who had excommunicated him, to give him absolution; and, after this ceremony ended, to have returned them both to their respective graves. How could a man, surrounded with such a blaze of miraculous testimony, remain in the character of a mere missionary, or even of an apostle! He was soon invested with the supreme ecclesiastical authority in England; and, as Archbishop of Canterbury, directed by Gregory to erect twelve churches within his own see, having also the same proud sanction to constitute an archbishopric at York, with provincial jurisdiction over twelve subordinate sees. Messengers sent by Augustin to Rome brought back with them a pall from the Pope as a badge of his archiepiscopal dignity. In this city of Canterbury Augustin dedicated a church to the honour of Christ, and Ethelbert founded the abbey of St. Peter and St. Paul, afterwards called St. Augustin's. And now the zeal of the aspiring monk rose so high, that the Christianity of the Welsh bishops did not satisfy him, unless they were brought by persuasion or coercion under the jurisdiction of the see of Rome, which it seemed to be his crowning object to render universal. Two conferences were held on this subject, and the first having failed, great preparations were made to render the second effectual. Seven bishops, with many monks from the monastery of Bangor, attended upon this occasion, under the sanction of their abbot, Dinoth. The story is a strange one, but comes to us so accredited as to deserve our attention, if not our entire acquiescence in all the particulars. It runs thus: This venerable assembly of ancient Christians are said to have consulted a certain solitary sage, on whose sagacity and foresight they were wont to place great reliance, whether it would be wise in them to give up their ecclesiastical independence, in compliance with the claims of the Roman Archbishop. "If," said he, "the man follows the example of his Master, who was meek and lowly of heart, he is God's own servant, and it is your duty to yield him obedience; if not, his pretensions are not worthy of being listened to. At the place where you are about to assemble, let Augustin and his attendants be first seated. And if, upon your entrance, the Archbishop rise to salute you, consider him as a messenger from God; if he refuse to shew this respect to you, refuse his proposals; for he has not taken upon him the yoke of Christ." When the British bishops entered the hall where Augustin was already seated, he received them as persons coming to do him homage, and continued in his seat. In conformity with the advice of the hermit, the British bishops refused acquiescence in the terms of the lordly prelate, and at once declined all subjection to the see of Canterbury, and the paramount authority of Rome.

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[1] 'Script. Brit.' p. 116.

Augustin in anger broke up the meeting, and is said to have dismissed it with the following menace: "If you will not accept of peace with your brethren, receive war from your enemies; if ye will not preach the way of life to the English, suffer death from their hands." Soon afterwards, Ethelfrid, King of Northumberland, marched with a large army to Caerleon, and, in a general slaughter, put twelve hundred monks of the monastery of Bangor to the sword.

The extent to which Augustin was implicated in this most atrocious act is a matter of much historic doubt. He has been called an excellent prophet who could so well secure the accomplishment of his own prediction. Among those, and, indeed, the principal among those, who viewed the transaction in this light, was Godwin, first bishop of Llandaff, and afterwards of Hereford, who published, in 1601, a Catalogue of the English bishops since the first planting of the Christian religion in this island, with a short account of their lives and actions; in the composition of which such diligence was displayed, that, as a reward, the Queen promoted him to a bishopric. He records[1] that Augustin, inflamed with anger at the rejection of his proposal by the Welsh bishops, set Ethelbert upon them as a wolf upon a flock of sheep, with an army borrowed in part from the King of Northumberland, and himself joined the army of the assailants. This testimony has been opposed, and some writers affirm, on the credit of respectable testimony, that Augustin and Pope Gregory both died in 604, and the slaughter of the monks happening in 605, Augustin must be acquitted of having taken an active part in that deed of blood.[1] After all, it appears clear, however, that Augustin anticipated the massacre which afterwards took place, and one can hardly exempt him from all suspicion of having had some intermeddling with it.

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[1] The work of Bishop Godwin, entitled in English 'The Catalogue,' was afterwards translated into Latin, and bore the title of 'De Præsulibus Angliæ

Images and other traces of pagan idolatry had not appeared, or been allowed to appear, in our churches during the first three centuries, nor had pagan temples during that period been permitted to be converted into Christian Churches. It was thought a great profanation to worship the true God in areas so stained with the sacrifices of idolatry. When Augustin arrived, the primitive simplicity of worship was still retained by the Britons and Scots, whose minds were filled with disgust at the ceremonies and superstitions introduced by the arbitrary monk, which seemed to threaten them with a revival of the heathen worship. Dagamus, a bishop of the Scots, was especially offended with the Romish emissaries, who were introducing among a people, who cherished a pure and simple belief, an intricate ritual, and an exterior display of pomp and magnificence. Such was his distaste for all these vain ceremonials, that he declined any intercourse with the Roman missionaries, refusing to sit at the same table, or lodge under the same roof.[2]

In the year 601 Gregory found his strength fast declining, and the time approaching when the decay of his physical energies must leave him to circuitous plans and subtle resources for carrying out his final projects. Still he laboured to establish a Romish hierarchy over the Anglo-Saxon Churches throughout England, and to extend it where the British bishops and clergy had not, and would not, acknowledge the ecclesiastical autho-

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Commentarius.' In 1615 the Bishop published a new edition of his 'Catalogue,' to which he prefixed a 'Discourse concerning the first conversion of Britain to the Christian religion.'

[1] See 'Wharton's Anglia Sacra,' tom. I. p. 89.

[2] See Bede's 'Eccl. Hist.' lib. II.

rity of Rome. Still he prosecuted with unabated zeal the object which lay nearest to his heart—the defeat of his rival, the Patriarch of Constantinople, in his efforts to establish in himself a supremacy. These secret plans and aspirations of Gregory met with no encouragement from Mauritius. The Emperor espoused rather the claims of John of Constantinople, whose conduct had raised his name for sanctity and self-denial so high as to justify, in the eyes of all, the favour with which his pretensions were regarded. It is singular enough that both these humble patriarchs had, on their appointments to their several dignities, sought an exemption from their honours by absconding, with the same—shall we call it bad or good?—success, and, perhaps, with the same sincerity. Gregory was not ashamed to reproach John with exercising the episcopal office after having attempted to save himself from it by flight. The mote in his brother's eye was thus obvious to his discernment, while the beam in his own seems to have escaped his observation and consciousness.[1]

It must be admitted that Gregory had not always experienced, at the hands of the Emperor Mauritius, an entire approval of his labours to avert from the Roman capital the evils daily accumulated upon it, and the expectations of worse wherewith it was threatened by the devastating sword of the barbarians. In one of his letters to the Emperor he says, "We hear nothing around us but lamentations and groans; we see nothing, to whatever side we turn our eyes, but objects of compassion and horror. . . . Few inhabitants now remain; and of the few that still remain, some are daily murdered, others are carried into captivity, and some daily appear before us whose hands have been cut off by the merciless enemy. To what a deplorable condition Rome is reduced (Rome, once the mistress of the world) we all know and see and feel." To put some stop to the march of these miseries, Gregory took upon him to interpose between the Exarch of the Emperor and the King of the Lombards; but neither the Exarch nor the Emperor approved of his pacificatory propositions; and a letter from Mauritius, declaring his displeasure at what had been done, and calling him a simple and improvident man—which the Pope considered only as a more courtly phraseology for a fool—had drawn a line across the intercourse of these two powerful individuals, which separated them from each other beyond the hope of reconciliation.

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[1] Greg. lib. IV. Ep. 38.

Gregory's interference with the conduct of the Exarch of Ravenna was the cause of much irritation between himself and the Emperor; but the epithets which, in a letter addressed immediately by himself to John, he bestowed upon the title of *universal* bishop, calling it not only ambitious and profane, but blasphemous, infernal, diabolical,[1] show the excited state of his feelings on this subject, and go some way towards the disclosure of the extraordinary motives which must have guided his pen in his letters of congratulation to Phocas and his wife, after the most horrid and revolting murders of which man has been guilty towards his fellow man, and the blood of which was then crying from the ground.[2] John of Constantinople died in the year 596, and Cyriacus was chosen and appointed in his stead. Cyriacus would fain have conciliated Gregory without relinquishing the title of Universal Bishop ; but so far were such terms from being listened to by the Patriarch of Rome, that he positively declares, in a letter to Cyriacus himself, that whoever calls himself Universal Bishop is the precursor of Antichrist. And this seemed to be the dominant feeling of his mind, when a fatal disease, the effect, probably, of his long course of labour and toil in works of mercy and charity, was bringing on his last hours, and accelerating the final catastrophe. He died on the 12th of March, 604, and was buried in one of the porches of the Church of St. Peter, under the altar of the Apostle St. Andrew, who, as the brother of the reputed founder of his see, he seems to have held next in veneration.

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[1] The true spirit of Pope Gregory's disavowal of all claims to be called an universal bishop, as blasphemous and diabolical, appears in the little heed taken of it by his successors in the popedom. In a decree issued by Boniface VIII. the pretensions of all the popes to universality of jurisdiction are concentrated and expressed in the following terms: "We declare, say, define, and pronounce it to be of necessity to salvation, for every human creature to be subject to the Roman pontiff."

[2] The letter runs in part thus: "Glory be to God in the highest! who, as it is written, changes times and removes kings, and sets up kings; who has made known to all what He was pleased to speak by His Prophet. The Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomsoever He will. Various are the changes, and many the vicissitudes of human life; the Almighty giving sometimes, in His justice, princes to afflict His people, and sending sometimes, in His mercy, princes to comfort and relieve them. We have been hitherto most grievously afflicted; but the Almighty has chosen you, and placed you on the imperial throne to banish, by your merciful disposition, all our afflictions and sorrows. Let the heavens, therefore, rejoice, and let the earth leap for joy; let the whole people return thanks for so happy a change! . . . May the republic long enjoy these happy times! May God, with His grace, direct your heart in every good thought, in every good deed! May the Holy Ghost that dwells in your breast, ever guide and assist you, that you may, after a long course of years, pass from an earthly and temporal to an everlasting and heavenly kingdom." (Greg. lib. XI. Ep. 38.) A second letter, written shortly afterwards, ends in the following turgid strain: "We hope the Almighty, who has begun to relieve us, will complete what He has so happily begun, and that He who has given us such pious lords, will deliver us from our cruel enemies. May the Holy Trinity, therefore, grant you long life, that the later we have received the blessings that flow from your piety, the longer we may enjoy them!" (Greg. lib. XI. Ep. 45.) His letter to the Empress Leontia, of the same date, is written in the same gross style of adulation. "What tongue," says he, "can utter, what mind can conceive, the thanks we owe to God, who has placed you on the throne to ease us of the yoke with which we have been hitherto so cruelly galled? Let the angels give glory to God in heaven; let men return thanks to God on earth; for the Republic is relieved and our sorrows are all banished. May the Almighty, who in His mercy has made you our emperors, make you likewise zealous defenders of the Catholic

Thus vanished from among men the most eminent and excellent of all the self-called successors of St. Peter, after having practised something too like a long course of dissimulation, to which we would fain give the name of self-delusion. He long, and we hope with some sincerity, disavowed and deprecated the jurisdiction and title of Universal Bishop ; but his quarrel with the Patriarch of Constantinople for his assumption

faith ! May He endow your minds with zeal and mercy ; with zeal to punish what is committed against God ; with mercy to bear and forgive what may be committed against yourselves ! May He grant to you, and to our most pious lord, a long reign, that the comforts and blessings we enjoy in it may be long ! I should perhaps have entreated you to take under your particular protection the hitherto most grievously afflicted Church of the Apostle St. Peter. But as I know you love God, I need not ask you to do what I am sure you are ready to do of your own accord. For the more you fear God, the more you must love His Apostle, to whom it was said, 'Thou art Peter,' &c. 'To thee will I give,' &c. I do not therefore doubt but you take care to oblige and bind Him to you by whom you desire to be loosened from your sins. May He therefore be the guardian of your empire ! May He be your protector on earth ! May He be your advocate in heaven ! that, after a long course of years, you may enjoy, in the kingdom of heaven, the reward which is due to you there for relieving your subjects from the burdens they groaned under, and rendering them happy upon earth !" (Greg. lib. XI. Ep. 46.) If we place by the side of these letters the words of admiration and attachment which were used towards Mauritius himself, in his letters to that prince, not long before the execrable murders committed upon him and his family, how shall we acquit the Pope of fraud and hypocrisy ! "His tongue," as he there says, "could not express the good he had received of the Almighty and his lord, the Emperor ; that he thought himself bound in gratitude to pray incessantly for the life of his most pious and most Christian lord ; and that, in return for the goodness of his most religious lord to him, he could do no less than love the very ground which he trod." (Greg. lib. II. Ep. 65 ; lib. VII. Ep. 48 ; lib. IX. Ep. 40.)

of that title and dignity, was not on account of the vanity and superbity of the name alone considered, but rather because of his being beforehand with St. Peter's successor in the adoption of a rank and title which Gregory considered as his by the right of inheritance and divine constitution. If the letters in the note on the previous page had been the only writings left by Gregory, his pen would have left no memorials to command the esteem and veneration of posterity: but his letters alone were eight hundred and forty in number; his commentary on the book of Job was contained in thirty-six books, and he wrote, on the duties of a pastor, four different treatises; four books of dialogues; twenty-two homilies on the Prophet Ezekiel; and forty homilies on the Gospels. Some of the productions above enumerated were considered as bearing strong testimony to his correctness on the points of divinity contained therein, and continued to have a high value set upon them by the theologians of the Romish communion; but his dialogues contain so many fables, foolish legends, and absurd miracles, that it were impossible to suppose Gregory to have believed them himself; and, if not, how shall we absolve him of the guilt of fraud and imposture! In his works there is first set before us the doctrine of the popish purgatory, and the authorities on which he grounded his belief of that prominent article of the Romish faith were nothing but apparitions and visions, unworthy of a mind which claimed to be qualified to put forth such matters as his own great and fundamental "discoveries." These dangerous, puerile, and preposterous discoveries concerning the state of departed souls, are so far from laying the religious world under special obligations to Gregory, and the doting authorities from which he draws his testimonies, that I cannot but look on the revelations on which some of his creed seems to have been founded, as little better then "blasphemous fables and dangerous deceits."

## [*Note omitted in page* 17.]

[Irenæus has been termed "omnium doctrinarum curiosissimus explorator." He may be said to merit such a title by the clue which he has furnished to the mystic number of the Beast, as contained in Rev. xiii. 20: "Here is wisdom, let him that hath understanding count the number of the Beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred, three score, and six." The well-known suggestion of Irenæus, that this number is answered by the Greek word *Λατεινος*, which, in the numerical value of its letters is equivalent to 666, has been adopted, with scarcely an exception, by all the most approved expositors of the Book of Revelation. "Hoc nomine," says Mede, "post Imperii divisionem et decem reges in provinciis ejus exortos, neque prius, Pseudopropheta Romanus cum reliquis occidentis incolis, discriminis ergo appellatus est; idque ab illis ipsis, quibus Apocalypsis scripta est, septem Asiæ ecclesiis. Namque Græci et cæteri Orientales penes quos in dilaceratione illâ Imperii nomen manserat, seipsos solos Romanos dici voluere; nos cum Pontifice nostro, et sub eo Episcopis, Regibus, Dynastis, fatali quodam instinctu, Latinos dixere." (Mede's 'Comment. Apoc.,' p. 215.) It is added in Poole's 'Synopsis,' "Et hæc distinctio Græcæ Latinæque ecclesiæ adeo insignis erat ut in generalibus conciliis, Occidentales Patres sive episcopi *Latini*, reliqui vero *Græci*, discriminatim appellarentur."

Bishop Bale has furnished a curious confirmation of this clue of Irenæus in his 'Scriptores Britannici,' where he says of Pope Vitalianus, "Oratores monachos in Angliam misit Theodorum quendam Græcum et Hadrianum Afrum, circa ann. Dom. 666 qui a Christo nato numerus est nominis Bestiæ, ut fluctuantes in susceptâ fide Papisticâ confirmarent, et ut Antichristi charactere credentes suos signarent. (Apoc. xiii.) Horas Latinas, cantiones Latinas, ceremonias, missas, et idololatrias Latinas, aliasque inanes nugas, ceremonias, et circulationes omnes in Templis Latinè fieri disposuit, juxta Græcam dictionem 'Lateinos,' quæ per literas numerales, prædictum Bestiæ numerum perficit." (Bale, 'Script. Brit.,' Cent. I., p. 71.)

It is observable that Basilides, a heretic of the second century, already mentioned, entitled the prince or lord of the angelic orders Abraxas, a name which, when written in Greek, contains letters that together make up the number 365, which is, according to him, the number of the heavens, and of the orders of angels. See 'Mosheim,' Cent. II., Part II., c. 5, § 11. —Ed.]

# INDEX

ÆRIUS, his opinions, 216

AMBROSE, his sudden elevation to the Bishopric of Milan, 181—Contest with the Empress Justina, 183—Absurdities attending his consecration of a church at Milan, 187—Remarks on his treatment of the Emperor Theodosius, 186, 187, 193—His contest with Symmachus, 193—His death, 185—Character, 186

APOLLINARIS, senior and junior, their learning and doctrines, 119, 120

APOSTOLICAL FATHERS briefly noticed, 11–14

ARIUS, his heresy described, 97

ARNOBIUS, notice of him, 66

ATHANASIUS, raised to the see of Alexandria, 81—Practical refutation of the slander raised against him, 81—His first banishment, 82—Restoration, 84—Again expelled, 85—Again restored, 87—Expelled a third time, 89—Restored again, 94—His death, 95—His works, 96—And character, 101

ATHENAGORAS, a short notice of him, and his 'Apology,' 23, 24

AUGUSTIN, his early history, 237—Progressive steps of his conversion, 244–247—His character of his mother, 248—Remarks on his prayer for her departed soul, 250—His promotion to the bishopric of Hippo, 252—His controversy with the Donatists, 254—And with the Pelagians, 258—His sentiments on grace and free will, 261, &c.—His last years, 269—His death, 271—His character, 272 and 282—His errors, 275—Extracts from his letters to Jerom and Paulinus, 276–279—Superstitious regard to relics, 281

AUGUSTIN the Monk, his mission to Britain, 351—Auricular confession, 305

BABYLAS, story connected with his relics, 190

BASIL, his parentage and early history, 109—His promotion to the archbishopric of Cæsarea, 111—His death and character, 113—His writings, 115

BONAVENTURE, his blasphemous application of the Psalter, 140

CHALCEDON, Council of, 295

CHRYSOSTOM, his birth and early career, 141—His elevation to the archbishopric of Constantinople, 143—His banishment, 144—And death, 145—His character, 145—Eloquence of his style, 146—Character of his writings, 147—Passages from his letters when in exile, 148, &c.

CHURCH, various meanings of the term, 1–8

CLEMENS ALEXANDRINUS, his high repute as Catechist, 31—His 'Stromata' and 'Hypotyposes,' the latter of which probably not his composition, 32

CONSTANTINOPLE, Council of, 126

CYPRIAN, his conversion and promotion to the bishopric of Carthage, 60—His baptismal controversy, exile, and matyrdom, 62, 63—Character and writings, 63

CYRIL of Alexandria, his controversy with the Novatians and Nestorians, 161, &c.—Character of him and of his writings, 165, 166

CYRIL of Jerusalem, his writings, 65

DAMASUS, his violent seizure of the bishopric of Rome, 202

DIONYSIUS of Alexandria, notice of him, 58

DONATISTS, history of this sect, 252, &c.

EARLY HERESIES, notice of, 15

EPHREM, notice of him, 156-160—His infirmary, 158

EPIPHANIUS, his history and writings, 134-139—Remarkable passage from his book on heresies in reference to the Collyridians, the Mariolatrists of that day, 139

EUSEBIUS, advanced to bishopric of Cæsarea, 68—His letter to Constantia on an image of Christ, 71—His character, 72—And writings, 73

EUTYCHES, his doctrinal error, 295—His character, 297—Contentions between his party and the orthodox, 300

FRAVITAS, trick practised by him to gain the see of Constantinople, 315

GERVASIUS AND PROTASIUS, discovery of their relics, 187

GORGONIA, notice of, 123

GRATIAN resigns the office of a Pontifex Maximus, 195

GREGORY THAUMATURGUS, his episcopal diligence and imputed miracles, 57, 58

GREGORY of Nyssa, notice of him, 116

GREGORY NAZIANZEN, his early history, 117—Invective against Julian, 121—Slight put on him by Basil, 122—Raised to the see of Constantinople, 125—His abdication of his see, 129—His death, 131—His orations and other writings, 131

GREGORY "THE GREAT," Bishop of Rome, his zealous execution of his duties, 349—His apology for images in churches, 350—His mission to the Saxons, 350—His fulsome letter to Phocas, 356—Death and character, 357

HILARY of Poictiers, his conversion, 102—His active opposition to the Arians, 103—His exile, 103—Death, 105—Style and character of his writings, 106-109

HYPATIA, fearful outrage inflicted on her by the mob of Alexandria, 167

IGNATIUS, notice of him and his epistles, 10, 11

IRENÆUS, character of his work against heresies, 27—Promotion to the bishopric of Lyons, and martyrdom, 29

ISIDORE of Pelusium, character, and specimens of his letters, 174-176

JEROM, his early history, 200—His controversy with Helvidius, 203—Settlement in the monastery of Bethlehem, 204—His Vulgate translation, 205—Death, 207—His strange view of St. Paul's rebuke of St. Peter, and correspondence with Augustin on the subject, 208-212, 233—Quarrel with Rufinus, 212—Augustin's remonstrance with him on the subject, 214—His contention with Jovinian, 216—Visit paid to him by Vigilantius, 226—The quarrel resulting from it, 229—Invectives against matrimony, 230—Lax sentiments as to truth, 234—Character of his writings, 234-236

JOVINIAN, notice of, 216, 230

JUSTIN MARTYR, observations on the philosophical bias of his theology, 19

JUSTINIAN, his theological edict, 331—His decree denouncing the Three Chapters, 332

LACTANTIUS, brief notice of him, 75—Character of his writings, 76, 77

LEO I., Bishop of Rome, his character, 288—Contest with the Bishop of Arles, 290—His letter to Flavian on the topics involved in the Eutychian controversy, 299—His sentiments on confession, 304—Death, 307

LEONIDAS, father of Origen, his martyrdom, 45

MACEDONIUS, his heresy noticed, 128

MANES, the doctrines of his heresy, 240

MARCELLUS, notice of his heresy, 127

MARTIN of Tours, his austerities, 220—Pseudo-miracles ascribed to him, 222

MELITO, his 'Apology' and 'Catalogue,' 24, 25

NESTORIUS, Bishop of Constantinople, 161—Errors imputed to him, and controversy with him and his followers, 162-166

NICE, first Council of, 80

ORIGEN, his early history, 44—His catechetical lectures at Alexandria, 46—His 'Hexapla,' 48—His excommunication, 49—Defence of Christianity against Celsus, 50—His theological errors, 52-56

Pamphilus, notice of, 57
Pantænus, notice of, 24
Papal Encroachments, 286
Paulinus, Bishop of Nola, short notice of him, 225—Images and relic worship in his Church, 224
Pelagius, his heretical opinions, 259, 260
Photinus, his heresy noticed, 127
Platonising Christians of the school of Alexandria, 20-24
Priscillian, his heretical tenets, 292

Rufinus, notice of him and of his writings, 213, 214

Sabellius, notice of his errors, 96
Sidonius Apollinaris, Bishop of Auvergne, his character, and specimens of his correspondence, 316-325
Sulpicius Severus, his superstitious tendencies, 219
Sylverius, Bishop of Rome, his deposition, 329
Symmachus, his attempts to plead the cause of paganism, 194
Synesius, Bishop of Ptolemais, his singular character as illustrated by his letters, 167-173

Tertullian, his character and writings, 33-44
Theodoret, Bishop of Cyrus, his history, 177—Character and writings, 178-180
Theodorus, Bishop of Mopsuestia, 180
Theophilus, Bishop of Alexandria, notice of him, 160

Valentinus, his heresy noticed, 22
Vigilantius, particulars of his early life, 217—His visit to Paulinus, 224—And to Jerom, 226—Jerom's quarrel with him, 229
Vigilius, Bishop of Rome, by purchase, 329—His vacillating conduct, 330
Vulgate, some account of it, 205

Zeno, the Emperor, his "Henoticon," 313

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# INDEX

PAGE
ABBOTT (Evelyn), Selections from Lucian, 30
Adams (W.), Holy Week, 3
——— Sacred Allegories, 27
A Kempis, Imitation of Christ, 22
Alford (Henry), Greek Testament, 16
——— New Testament for English Readers, 16
Andrewes (Bishop Lancelot), Manual for the Sick, 18
Annotated Prayer Book, By J. H. Blunt, 13
Annual Register, 10
Aristophanis Comœdiæ, by W. C. Green, 28
Aristophanes (Scenes from), by Sidgwick, 30
Avancini, Vita et Doctrina Jesu Christi, 16

BICKERSTETH (E. H.), Two Brothers, 7
——— Yesterday, To-Day, etc., 7
Bigg (Chas), Thucydidis Historia, 28
Blunt (J. H.) Directorium Pastorale, 6
——— Household Theology, 13
——— Key to Bible, 20
——— Key to Church Catechism, 20
——— Key to Church History (Ancient), 20
——— Key to Church History (Modern), 21
——— Key to Common Prayer, 20
——— Reformation, 26
——— and Norris (J. P.), Keys to Christian Knowledge, 20
——— and Phillimore (G. F.), Book of Church Law, 1
Body (George), Life of Justification, 9
Book of Lessons, 26
——— The, of Church Law, 1
Brewer (J. S.), Athanasian Creed, 26
Bright (A. W.), and Medd (P. G.), Liber Precum Publicarum, 13
Bruton (E. G.), Ecclesiastical Dilapidations, 7

CAMPION (W. M.) and Beamont (W. J.), Prayer Book Interleaved, 10
Catena Classicorum, 28
Chilcot (William), Evil Thoughts, 23
Church Builder, 26
Common Prayer and Ordinal, 1549, 16
Companion to Old Testament, 14
Consolatio, by C. E. Kennaway, 6

DEMOSTHENIS ORATIONES, by Arthur Holmes, 28
——— Publicæ, by G. H. Heslop, 28
Dictionary of Theology, 24

PAGE
Döllinger (John J. Ign. Von.), Fables respecting the Popes, &c., 14
——— Lectures on Reunion, 3
Dominican Artist (A), 4

EDWARD VI., First Book of Common Prayer of, 16
Euripides, Scenes from, by Sidgwick, 30

FIELD (Walter), Stones of the Temple, 8
Fosbery (T. V.), Hymns and Poems, &c., 7

GLOSSARY of Ecclesiastical Terms, by Orby Shipley, 7
Goulburn (Dean), Manual of Confirmation, 6
——— Family Prayers, 6
——— Pursuit of Holiness, 1
——— Thoughts on Personal Religion, 1
Gould (S. B.), Curious Myths, &c., 17
——— Religious Belief, 3
Gratry (Père) Henri Perreyve, 5
——— Last Days of, 5
Greek Testament, by Dean Alford, 16
Green (W. C.), Aristophanis Comœdiæ, 28
Guide to Heaven, 2
Gurney (Augustus), Home Life of Jesus of Nazareth, 12

HADDAN (A. W.), Apostolic Succession, 18
Help and Comfort for the Sick Poor, 18
Herbert (George), Poems and Proverbs, 23
Herodoti Historia, by H. G. Woods, 28
Heslop (G. H.), Demosthenis Orationes Publicæ, 28
Hidden Life of the Soul, 4
Hodgson (Chris.), Instructions for the Clergy, 16
Holmes (Arthur), Demosthenis Orationes, 28
Homeri Ilias, by S. H. Reynolds, 28
Hook (W F.), Family Prayers, 6
Hoole (Chas. H.), Shepherd of Hermas, 6
Hymns and Poems, by T. V. Fosbery, 7

IMITATION OF CHRIST, 22
Isocratis Orationes, by John Edwin Sandys, 28

JANUS, Pope and Council, 17
Jebb (R. C.), Sophoclis Tragœdiæ, 28
Juvenalis Satiræ, by G. A. Simcox, 28

KAY (W.) on the Psalms, 13
Keys to Christian Knowledge, 19, 20
Kennaway (C. E.), Consolatio, 6

PAGE

Letters from Rome on the Council, by Quirinus, . . . . . . 17
Liber Precum Publicarum, . . . 13
Liddon (H. P.), Bampton Lectures, . 13
——— Elements of Religion, . 13
——— University Sermons, . 13
Louise, Life of Madame, de France, . 4
Lyte (Henry F.), Poems, . . . 11

MacColl (M.), Damnatory Clauses, etc., 7
Mahan (Milo), Church History, . . 12
Mant (Richard), Ancient Hymns, . . 7
——— Happiness of the Blessed, 26
Melvill (Henry), Sermons, . . . 15
——— Latter Sermons, 15
——— Sermons on Less Prominent Facts, . . . . . 15
Mercier (Anne), Our Mother Church, . 12
Moberly (George), Brighstone Sermons, . 3
——— Great Forty Days, . 3
Monsell (John S. B.), Parish Musings, . 8
Moore (Daniel), Aids to Prayer, . . 26
——— Sermons, . . . 9
Mozley's (J. B.) Lectures on the Miracles, 11

Neale (J. M.), Herbert Tresham, . 27
Newman (J. H.), Sermons, . . 27
——— Sermons, Oxford University, . . 27
——— Sermons, Subjects of the Day, . . . . . . 27
New Testament by Henry Alford, . 16
Norris (J. B.), Key to the Acts, . . 21
——— Key to the Four Gospels, . 21

Papillon (T. L.), Terenti Comœdiæ, . 28
Path of Holiness, . . . . . 2
Perraud (Père A.), Last Days of Père Gratry, . . . . . . 5
Perreyve (Henri), Life of, . . . 5
Persii Satiræ, by A. Pretor, . . 28
Phillpotts (M. C.), Hillford Confirmation, 18
——— Manor Farm, . . 27
Pope, The, and the Council, by Janus, . 17
Prayer Book Interleaved, . . . 10
Prayers and Meditations for Holy Communion, . . . . . 10

Quirinus, Letters from Rome, . . 17

Reynolds (S. H.), Homeri Ilias, . . 28
Ridley (W. H.), Bible Readings, . . 11
Rivington's Devotional Series, . . 22
——— Mathematical Series, . . 29
Roberts (John), English Nursery Rhymes, 27
Romanoff (H. C.), Historical Narratives, . 10
——— Rites and Customs of the Greco-Russian Church, . . 14
Romanoff (H. C.), S. John Chrysostom's Liturgy, . . . . . 11
Rossetti (Maria F.), Shadow of Dante, . 8

Sales (S. Francis de), Devout Life, . 23
——— Letters, . . 6
——— Life, . . 5
——— Spirit, . . 5
Sandys (J. E.), Isocratis Orationes, . 28
Scudamore (W. E.), Manual of Prayers. . 12
——— Notitia Eucharistica, 12
Self-Renunciation, . . . . 3
Services of the Church, . . . 26
Shakspere's As You Like It, . . 30
——— Coriolanus, . . . 30
——— Hamlet, . . . 30
——— Macbeth, . . . 30
——— Much Ado about Nothing, . 30
——— Tempest, . . . 30
Shepherd of Hermas, . . . 6
Shipley (Orby), Glossary of Ecclesiastical Terms, . . . . . . 7
Sickness; Its Trials, &c., . . . 27
Sidgwick's Scenes from Greek Plays, . 30
Simcox (G. A.), Juvenalis Satiræ, . . 28
Smith (J. H.), Algebra, Part I. . . 29
——— Algebra, Exercises on, . 29
——— Geometry, . . . 29
——— Hydrostatics, . . 29
——— Statics, . . . 29
——— Trigonometry, . . 29
——— (R. Prowde), Latin Prose Exercises, 30
Sophoclis Tragœdiæ, by R. C. Jebb, . 28
Stainer (John), Theory of Harmony, . . 11
Star of Childhood, . . . . 2
Stephens (A. J.), Argument: Sheppard *v.* Bennett, . . . . . . 14
Stone (S. J.), Poems, . . . 9
Sutton (Fred. H.), Church Organs, . 11

Taylor (Jeremy), Holy Dying, . . 22
——— Holy Living, . . 22
Terenti Comœdiæ, by T. L. Papillon, . 28
Thucydidis Historia, by Chas. Bigg, . 28
Treasury of Devotion, . . . 2
Trelawny, (C. T. C.), Perranzabuloe, . 27

Walton (H. B.), and Medd (P. G.), Common Prayer and Ordinal, 1549, . 16
Way of Life, . . . . . 2
Williams (Isaac), Devotional Commentary, 19
——— Female Scripture Characters, . . . . . . 18
——— Old Testament Characters, . . . . . . 18
Wilson (Bishop), Lord's Supper, . . 22
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